NEW!

MEGA

100% PURE SEGA MEGA DRIVE... October 1992 Issue 1 £1.95

EA HOCKEY RETURNS!

World exclusive: we review *NHLPA Hockey*, the follow-up to EA's classic sports sim

TOP 100

Arguments ahoy! Will our Mega Drive Top 100 spill your pint?

60 games TIPPED (and the tips work, too)

MORE THAN JUST A GAME...

How EASN turns real-life sport into Mega Drive classics

WIN! The first 50 Sonic 2's into the UK!

IS KRYTEN ANY GOOD AT *THUNDERFORCE III* OR WHAT?

We put Red Dwarf's mechanoid on the spot

Future PUBLISHING
Your guarantee of value

10
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EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER
CORPORATION
SPEEDBALL 2

TERMINATOR	MEGADRIVE	MASTER SYSTEM
EURO CLUB SOCCER	MEGADRIVE	-
SPEEDBALL 2	MEGADRIVE	-
CHUCK ROCK	MEGADRIVE	MASTER SYSTEM
CORPORATION	MEGADRIVE	-

virgin games-
immaculate
concepts

hyperReal^5
THE TERMINATOR

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GAMESMASTER ZONE
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YOU MUST NEGOTIATE
TUMBLE DRYERS, DOD
AVOID WASHING MACH
SIDE-STEP GRANNIES.

GAMESMASTER ZONE
GAME BOY
Commodore AMIGA
AMIGA

MASTER ZONE,

GE FRIDGES,

INES AND

Complete that simple mission and you've just about made it to The Gamesmaster Zone, at Comet.

A totally excellent place, that's based on Channel 4's Gamesmaster Show.

Check out the games in this place. There are literally hundreds of them. The latest and the greatest.

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COMET
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ZONE
DISCOUNT CARD

The Zone is also a seriously hands-on situation. You can actually try out the new titles. We call it 'play before you pay', and it helps you make sure you're investing in a game you really love.

In fact there are over 250 games, so it might be a good idea to check out the Comet Top Ten Chart for starters.

So get down to Comet and enter The Gamesmaster Zone. There's one thing we forgot to mention however; you'll probably have to get past everyone else who reads this ad.

Good luck.

COMET
YOU KNOW WHERE TO COME.

All Comet stores will have a Gamesmaster Zone by 12th September 1992.

MEGA

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MEGA comes to you from Future Publishing, a company founded just seven years ago, but which now sells more computer magazines than any other publisher in Britain. We offer:

- **Better advice. Our titles are packed with tips, suggestions and explanatory features, written by the best in the business. (That's us, that is – MEGA team.)**
- **Stronger reviews. We have a cast-iron policy of editorial independence, and our reviews give clear buying recommendations.**
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- **Greater relevance. Future editors follow these two golden rules: Understand your readers' needs. And then satisfy them.**
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- **Better value for money. More pages, better quality: magazines you can trust.**

MEGA

From the makers of Sega Power, Super Play, Total, Amiga Format, Amiga Power, Amiga Shopper, ST Format, PC Format, Commodore Format, Amstrad Action, Your Sinclair, Future Music.

Future PUBLISHING LEISURE

Psst! Best bribe wins a cart, so send yours in now to MEGA Quick Comp, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

8 MEGA CITY

News, hot gossip, competitions and essential stories from Europe, Japan and the USA. If you want to hear it first, and if you *really* want to know what's going on in the world of Sega Mega Drive gaming, then this is the place to be

Kim Basinger on your Mega CD as the star of *Cool World*. For the full exposé (of the story, not of Kim – sorry), read MEGA City

14 WIN! SONIC 2

The competition every games player in the country has been waiting for. MEGA has reserved 50 of the first carts to be air-lifted into Europe – and one of them could be yours! Elsewhere in this issue you can win: a coin-op, 25 Game Genies, carts, 100 Terminator posters, a Game Gear and 5 Virgin games jackets!

***WIN!* One of 50 copies of *Sonic 2* on page 14, then *gasp* at brand new pictures on page 29**

16 MEGA ASKS: IS KRYTEN ANY GOOD AT *THUNDERFORCE III*, OR WHAT?

The first in a series of interviews in which TV celebs have their games-playing skills put to the test by the MEGA team.

It's all part of a revenge campaign really. Neil figures that if he has to make a fool of himself on Gamesmaster, then it's only fair that the TV stars should suffer the same

Image by Mike Vaughan

So is Red Dwarf's admirable Kryten as skilled at zapping aliens as he is at hoovering with his groinal socket? There's only one way to find out...

18 EASN: MORE THAN JUST A GAME...

John Madden Football, NHLPA Hockey, Bulls Vs Lakers, PGA Tour Golf – four games from the **Electronic Arts Sports Network**, four sports sims and four of the best games the Mega Drive has to offer.

But how were they made so realistic? Who trained the computer teams? How come no-one else has managed to turn real sport into video games so well? MEGA talks to the brains behind the games

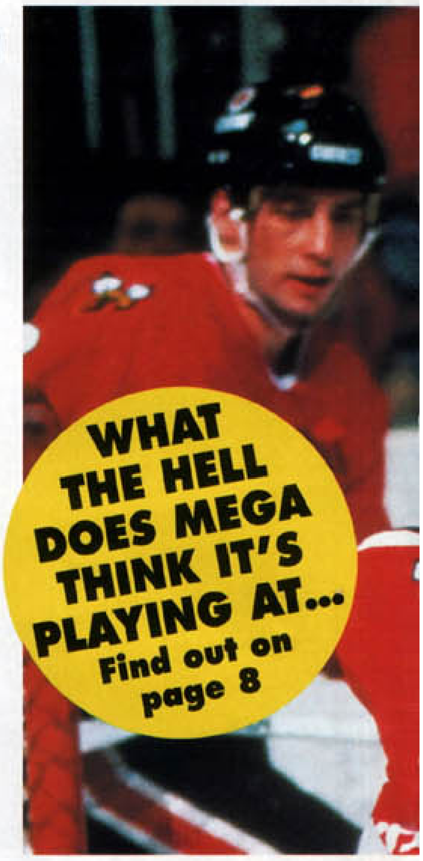
23 THE CHARTS

Grey import and official charts to what's hot and what's not. *And* it's sponsored by Penguin! Snack-tastic MEGA mates! (Never *ever* say that again – Ed)

24 PREVIEWS

MEGA beats the rest of the world and gets the WORLD EXCLUSIVE previews of:
John Madden Football '93
James Bond – The Duel
Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade
Mega Lo Mania
PLUS! Your complete guide to coming attractions for the Mega Drive and Mega CD. All this and *Sonic 2* (yes!)

***John Madden Football '93* from EASN. Can the best video game of all-time *really* be improved upon? Find out, if you will, on page 21...**



WHAT THE HELL DOES MEGA THINK IT'S PLAYING AT... Find out on page 8

62 MEGA PLAY

Essential tips, dirty cheats and crucial playing guides. We GUARANTEE each of the tips works (and there's over sixty of them to get to grips with). So if you're stuck in a shoot-'em-up, stuck in a sim, or, erm, pooped in a platformer, then this is the place to find help

REVIEWED THIS MONTH

NHLPA Hockey 32
Krusty's Super Fun House 40
Prince of Persia (Mega CD) 42
LHX Attack Chopper 44
Thunderforce IV 48
Speedball 2 50
The Aquatic Games 52
Sports Talk Baseball 54
Team USA Basketball 56
Smash TV 57
Dodgeball 57
Dragon's Fury 60
PLUS! Budget round-up 60

CONTENTS

NHLPA Hockey is here! MEGA brings you the world exclusive review of the follow-up to EASN's classic ice hockey skate-'em-up! See page 32...

65 RIP 'N' TIP

Olympic Gold and *Golden Axe 2* are the first two games to get the full MEGA Rip 'n' Tip treatment. Designed to be cut out and kept with your cartridges, these Rip 'n' Tip guides offer all the essential tips you'll need to get the most out of your games. Add to your collection with MEGA each and every month!

70 MEGA MEDIC

Gaming questions, sir? Our man Paul Mellerick (surely not the man who thrashed 1991 Sega European Champion Danny Curley? One and, to boot, the same) has the answers...

74 ARENA

Wacky challenges, secret rooms, hidden levels and strange gameplay happenings. MEGA boldly goes whither no playing tips have gone before...

76 TOP 100

So, which *is* the best Mega Drive game of all time? And which, indeed, is the direst? Is *Sonic* guaranteed number one spot, or will there be a shock result?

For the full, shocking, hideously opinionated, disagreement-inducing and pint-spilling rundown, read the Top 100 – preferably *before* you get sold a pup

86 SUBSCRIBE

Fancy a *free* copy of a cult Japanese cartoon-epic? Want to guarantee your future copies of MEGA? Then subscribe!

88 THE 1992 SEGA EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

There's this German, a Frenchman, a Spaniard, a Welshman and Julien Clarey in this nightclub, right? OK, so Julien turns to the Welshman and says, "How would you like to..." – damn, not enough space (no, that's not it). Full sordid story: page 88

90 MEGA MOUTH

The cushiest job in the world: answering readers' letters in the first ever issue of a magazine – there aren't any! Except, of course, the one's we've made up ourselves.

PLUS! Confessions from the diary of a stunt Mega Drive, the curious fiction competition, and the exceedingly odd – nay *bizarre* – letters of Harold S Bloxham (retired)

92 MAIL ORDER

MEGA offers you some great stuff at some seriously bargain-resembling prices. All the stuff comes recommended and at a price you'll find hard to beat!

The Sega limousine. Exclusively for Sega champs, page three models, footballers and the King of Norway

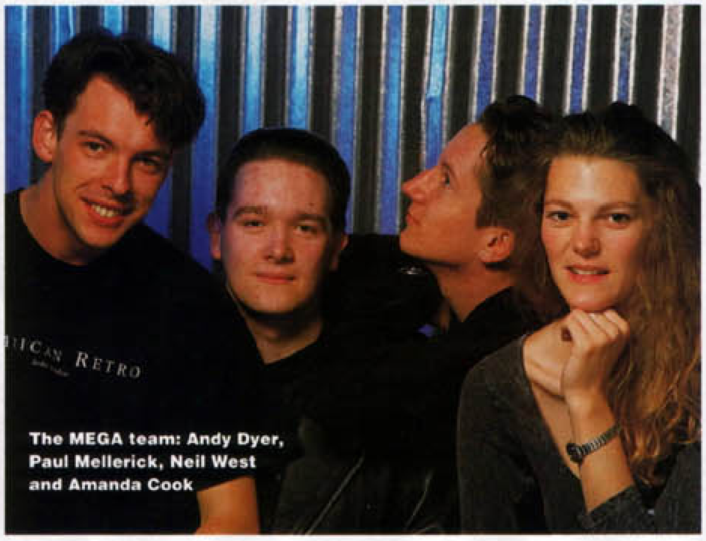
93 READER SURVEY

So what do you *really* think of MEGA? This is your chance to make the world's best Mega Drive mag even better

98 SHUT DOWN

Win a coin-op! PLUS! Find out what next month's issue of MEGA (on sale **Thursday 15 October**) will have to offer *you*. Right, that's enough contents. Now read the rest of the mag! Well, go on then...

MEGA
THE START OF SOMETHING BIG



The MEGA team: Andy Dyer, Paul Mellerick, Neil West and Amanda Cook

Hello, and congratulations on buying the very first issue of MEGA

Relax, we're not going to rant on about how great the mag is – you're smart enough to own a Mega Drive so we know you recognise quality when you see it. We're confident that after you've looked through the 100 pages of this mag you'll come away more than happy, so let's just fill you in on why MEGA was created:

① The Sega Mega Drive is currently at the cutting-edge of video game technology. And with the imminent launch of the Mega CD, the number of top-quality games available is mushrooming by the minute. The future's so bright...

② ...you need a mag 100% dedicated to keeping you totally up-to-date with everything you need to get the most from your console. In-depth reviews, red-hot news and 100% reliable playing tips.

So a team – that's us lot – was formed. Neil West is Editor, having been writing on best-selling Sega Power since the Mega Drive was launched two years ago. Andy Dyer, one of the country's most respected games reviewers came next, after abandoning his SNES for the more exciting world of Sega. Paul Mellerick, possibly the country's best Mega Drive player (he creamed Danny Curley, the 1992 British champ) leapt at the chance to leave Sega Force and offer his expertise to MEGA. And lastly came Amanda Cook, designer and Sega gamer extraordinaire. Yeah, yeah – she's pretty too.

Our brief from the bosses upon high? Simply to create the best Mega Drive magazine in the world. A magazine that credits its readers with intelligence, reviews games honestly and laughs in the face of all corporate exploitation of the consumer.

Hmm. We thought it all sounded a bit grandiose as well, but this is what we came up with. So thanks for taking time out to buy it, and we genuinely hope you enjoy reading MEGA as much as we enjoyed putting it together...

MEGA team

WHAT
TO TH

It spins, it scales, it zooms and it flips. The Mega CD's got a big front

To cut manufacturing costs there are no buttons on the Mega CD...

The Mega CD has it's own power supply, but no on/off switch...

All the intricate workings are controlled on-screen via your TV and the Mega Drive's control pad

FOUR STARTERS

Four MEGA CD games have become widely available in the UK from Japan via grey import outlets. If you're not put right off by our assessments, you can probably pick them up for about £35 a throw. But honestly, you'd do better to save your cash or shell out on another half-decent Mega Drive title.

Here's the lowdown – let's just hope they don't get much lower...

THE HELL HAPPENED
E MEGA CD?

POWER — ON
MEGA DRIVE SEGA
ON — POWER — OFF
RESET
VOLUME
READY
COMPACT disc
ACCESS
MEGA-CD
SEGA

Last December the Mega CD was unveiled in Japan. But gamesplayers in the UK are still waiting. What's going on?

There is still no official word from Sega Europe about a release date for the eagerly-awaited Mega CD, almost a year after it made its debut in Japan.

MEGA understands that an appearance before Christmas depends on the availability of decent software.

Sega Europe's chief executive officer Nick Alexander has admitted to MEGA he is, "extremely concerned" at the lack of decent titles for the hardware.

So far nothing has been released in Japan or the US that comes near to fulfiling the promise the hardware specification offers.

There are four titles in common circulation on grey-import *(Earnest Evans, Heavy Nova, Funky Horror Band* and *Sol Feace)* and none would rate 50% in a MEGA review. Even as Mega Drive titles they'd barely scrape 60%.

Prince Of Persia (reviewed page 42) is typical. Vast storage space and digital sound capabilities are used only to prop up a massive introductory front end: the custom graphics chips aren't used at all.

There's been talk of compilation CDs (a selection of Mega Drive games sold on one CD – bets are on that *Quackshot* and *Castle Of Illusion* will come bundled with the Mega CD when it's finally released) and there have been a few CD RPGs (big deal – they're easy).

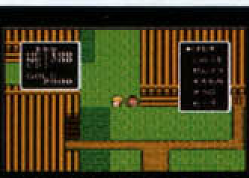
But where's the custom-scaling? Where's the sprite rotation? Where are the arcade-quality beat-'em-ups, shoot-'em-ups and coin-op cons?

Still, as cliché merchants would have it, it isn't all doom and gloom. We've seen enough evidence to suggest that hot titles are indeed on their way.

And when you know *John Madden* took four years – *four years!* – to create (see our EASN feature beginning page 18), it makes sense that titles seen so far are little more than "shovelware," ported over to CD with little attempt to take advantage of its massive memory and hardware custom scaling and sprite rotation. No, those titles will come – but they'll take time. Sega have got it right.

EARNEST EVANS 30%

Starts promisingly, with impressive large, full-screen cartoon intro. But it's all in Japanese and the lip-sync is right up the swanny. Our bullwhip-wielding hero (what a guy) moves around while standing, crouching or crawling! He sticks to the scenery and he somersaults in mid-air for no apparent reason! Poor effort indeed.



FUNKY HORROR BAND 31%

Cartoon-style role-player has you interacting and extracting information from other characters. Lots of text, and since it's almost completely Japanese, progress is, er, *interesting.* Intro's not bad (Japanese song: English chorus!), but the rest may as well be Mega Drive for all the Mega CD technology it uses. Not entirely a classic.

HEAVY NOVA 12%

How many fighting moves make a half-decent beat-'em-up? 10? 20? *2?* That's the entire repertoire of this futuristic fighter with you, a robot, wandering scrolling levels, duffing robots over. At level end you take on boss robots who need loads of hits. Wow. Graphics, gameplay from the 1970s – make that 1970BC.

SOL FEACE 48%

Space-based shoot-'em-up that's the pick of a bad bunch and still nothing special. It's very fast, and effort has gone into using the sprite rotation chips. It's short on originality, though, and long on the kind of stuff that makes your bog-standard sideways-scroller. Not enough to make you rush out and put down a deposit on a Mega CD.

The Future Entertainment Show

COME AND SEE THE FUTURE

Thursday 5 November through to Sunday 8: there's only one place to be if you're seriously into video games. The Future Entertainment Show – from the people who bring you MEGA – hits Earl's Court in London for four solid days of all that's at the cutting edge of home video game entertainment – and that includes all the latest Sega stuff.

Electronic Arts, Virgin Games, Tengen and Flying Edge (to name just – hang on – four) will be there showing off all their latest Mega Drive games. There'll be giant video walls, new game announcements and a Sega arcade as well as the chance to buy cheap carts.

This is one hell of a show we're talking about here. This is the kind of stuff to expect:

- Flying Edge are taking along WWF wrestlers to show off their up-and-coming Mega Drive game.
- ITV's new Bad Influence! video game show will be broadcasting from the event, and (best of all, perhaps),
- the MEGA team will be there swash-bucklingly bagging exclusives, diligently reporting on all the latest news and, well... courageously meeting you lot.

So if you see any of the MEGA team at the show, come up and say hi – the first ten people to introduce themselves with something nice to eat will win a cart. You can't say fairer than that.

There are also four or five highly juicy items we're forbidden to tell you about just yet. But if you'd like to see *Sonic 2* before it's released anywhere in the world, we suggest you might like a day out in London in early November...

See you there!

- **There'll be 100,000 people there. So book early and save queues and dosh: see page 58 for details.**

£10,000 UP FOR GRABS

Yes, you heard right, £10,000 (cool, hard cash) is the first prize in the 1992 National Computer Games Championships, and we're going to show you how you can enter.

The championships are being organised by Future Publishing (the people who bring you MEGA), Virgin Retail and ITV's video game TV show Bad Influence!

OK, so here's the lowdown. The championship is open to gamesplayers all over the country, but concentrates on Mega Drive, SNES and Amiga players. There can only be one winner, however, so it's up to you good people out there to make sure it's a Mega Drive player who comes out on top. But to get all the way to the grand finals you're going to have to prove yourself on all three formats.

There are three stages to the competition, so make sure you turn up to the qualifying heats. Regional contests will be decided by how well you score on *The Aquatic Games (starring James Pond)* in two minutes. SNES players qualify by playing *Robocop 3* and Amiga players will be tested on *Zool*. In the regional finals, you'll have to play all three games.

Here's when and where you can enter...

1. LONDON
Heats: Monday 26 to Thursday 29 October
Virgin Game Centres: Croydon, Guildford, Ilford, Kingston and 100 Oxford St Game Centre
Regional Final:
Friday 30 October
Marble Arch Megastore

2. BIRMINGHAM
Heats: Monday 26 to Thursday 29 October
Birmingham Megastore
Regional Final:
Friday 30 October
Birmingham Megastore

3. CARDIFF
Heats: Monday 26 October to Thursday 29 October
Bristol Game Centre
Cardiff Megastore
Regional Final:
Friday 30 October
Cardiff Megastore

4. MANCHESTER
Heats: Monday 19 to Thursday 22 October
Stockport Game Centre
Manchester Megastore
Regional Final:
Friday 23 October
Manchester Megastore

5. GLASGOW
Heats: Monday 12 to Thursday 15 October
Glasgow Megastores at Argyle Street and Union Street; Falkirk and East Kilbride Game Centres
Regional Final:
Friday 16 October
Glasgow Argyle St Megastore

6. NEWCASTLE
Heats: Monday 26 October to Thursday 29 October
Gateshead Game Centre
Newcastle Megastore
Regional Final:
Friday 30 October
Newcastle Megastore

Three or four heat winners will be chosen for each of the regional finals.

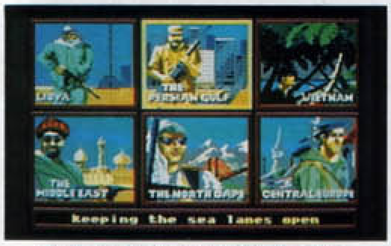
These lucky few, this happy band, then do battle on all three machines to find a winner. Each of six regional finalists (and two highest scoring runners up) go on to...

THE GRAND FINALS!
At: The Future Entertainment Show, Earls Court, London on: Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 November *(see page 58)*

THE GRAND PRIZES!
1st prize: £10,000 plus a Mega Drive, SNES and Amiga
2nd Prize: £4,000
Six runners-up prizes: Mega Drive, SNES and Amiga, plus all the software used in the finals.

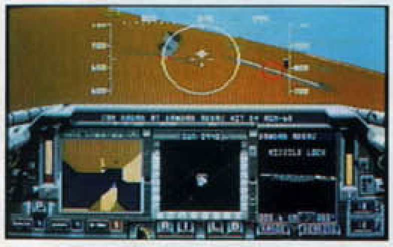
THE GRAND FINALE!
So beg, borrow or, er, buy a copy of *The Aquatic Games* – review: page 52 – and *get* practising! See you there...

F15 STRIKE EAGLE 2 – INCOMING?



Sort out the Libyans, hellfire the Arabs, bosh the Gooks, etc... Hardly a politically correct game

The basic model Strike Eagle Mk 2 popular plus with stereo and sun roof

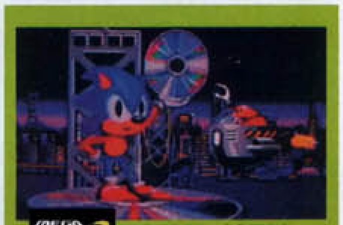


Go up, down, fly around, loop-the-loop and defy the ground. Lovely

Negotiations continue between Sega and Microprose, but it looks as if you can look forward to *F15 Strike Eagle 2* on your Mega Drive early next year

10 THINGS YOU *NEVER* KNEW ABOUT SONIC...

1. Er...
2. Oh God. Have we sunk this far already?
3. Yes
10. Right. Stop this now



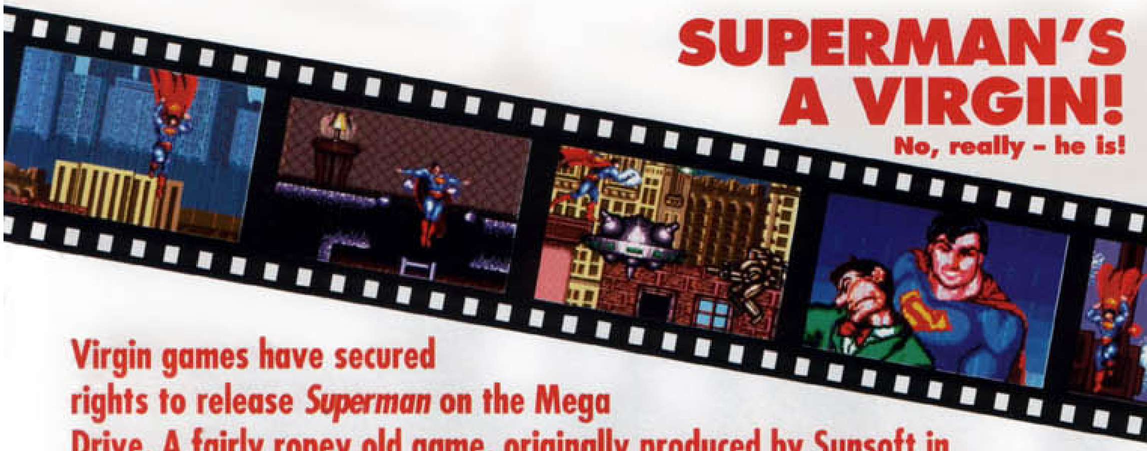
SUPER SONIC

(Sega)

Spikey speed-merchant should do for the Mega CD what he did for the Mega Drive. Not clear whether the game exploits the Mega CD's special graphical capabilities (game plot remains much the same), but high-quality music is promised. Expect great things.

SUPERMAN'S A VIRGIN!

No, really – he is!



Virgin games have secured rights to release *Superman* on the Mega Drive. A fairly ropey old game, originally produced by Sunsoft in the US but now re-packaged and re-released, *Superman* arrives in December

WILLY BEAMISH

(Sierra)

Another tried and trusted title making transition from PC-to Mega CD. Big, bright and colourful graphics adventure has you baby-sitting for little sister, but hankering after excitement.

Immense Mega CD storage space will hold highly-detailed, full-screen graphics – could be a classic.

WIN! one of 25 Game Genies
GAME GENIE
16-BIT
POWER

YOUR CHEATING CART

MEGA have 25 Game Genies to give away, courtesy of Hornby Hobbies. A cheating cart (like Datel's Action Replay), it fiddles and twiddles with your cart's programming to give you infinite lives, infinite energy and all sorts of other help. But that's not all, for if you can find the right code (a matter of trial and error), you can alter all sorts of other things, like the points a touchdown earns in *John Madden Football*, the number of hits it takes to kill a baddy or the height a character jumps.

The Mega Drive Game Genie is released in November at [illegible]. But 25 readers who send in the best games tips get one free... Send your tips, codes, complete solutions or cheats to 'What do tips mean? PRIZES!', MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. All entries must reach us before 30 October.

MEGA HOT LINE
MEGA HOT LINE
MEGA HOT LINE
MEGA HOT LINE

It's the MEGA team Hot line

Call us up! From 6 pm through to 9 pm on Thursday 24 September the whole MEGA team will be awaiting your calls.

So if you fancy telling us what you think of this first issue, swapping manly tales of *John Madden Football* heroics or just having a good goss – then this is the number to call: (0225) 442244.

There'll be a few mystery prizes to be given away throughout the evening, especially for anyone coming up with some acute observations about MEGA itself and how we can improve it, so give us a call and you could get lucky. You could also discover the answers to the following questions:

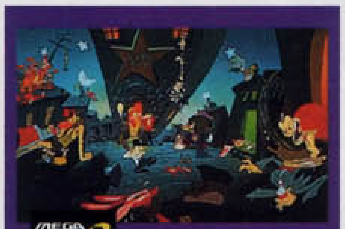
- Why did Neil and Amanda leave *Sega Power* together?
- Andy used to be a Nintendo player: now he's a Mega Drive fan. Why?
- Paul Mellerick has only lost a games challenge twice: who were they against – and what games were they?

Remember: Thursday 24 September; 6 to 9 pm; (0225) 442244.

Note: we're not ripping you off by charging 38p a minute "cheap" (ha!) rate and an outrageous 45p a minute "at all other times". In fact, we're making no money out of this at all, sadly, though we've been promised as much pizza and beer as we can get through. So if we mumble somewhat, you'll know why.

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION

MTV have got a new video game programme under way called Mega Byte. So if you're one of the lucky ones who's got a satellite dish, you're sorted aren't you?



COOL WORLD

(Sega)

Based on animated/live action film (sort of Roger Rabbit II without rabbits) *Cool World* features animated sequences from the movie – including delectable moves of a certain Ms Basinger as the character the animator understandably falls in lust with. Yum.

BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

Still at school? Unemployed? Don't like your job? Well, maybe you fancy working within the Sega video game business. We're not telling you how to do get in, just showing you how other people did it – so if you're felling ambitious, take notes.

NO. 1: JOURNALIST

NAME: Andy Dyer

JOB: Deputy Editor of MEGA magazine

AGE: 24

JOB DESCRIPTION: Reviewing games, standing in for Neil when he's away, liaising with Sega and the software houses to arrange game coverage, having a say in the way the magazine looks and what's included.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS: 8 'O' Levels (one in English Literature and two in English Language), 2 'A' levels (one in English Literature)

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE: Plays video and computer games. A lot.

PREVIOUS JOBS: 18 months as a home insurance underwriter, 12 months as a punch-bag in a computer systems department of an insurance company, then a few more months as a car insurance underwriter before becoming a new (and rather crap) games reviewer.

FIRST BREAK: Getting the job as staff writer on the launch issue of Commodore Format – another magazine from Future Publishing, the people responsible for MEGA. I answered an advert in the Bristol Evening Post after a guy I was living with pointed it out. I knew a fair amount about C64 games so I applied – and got the job.

GOOD THINGS ABOUT JOB: Almost everything (er, except working on tips which, incidentally, are Satan's invention).

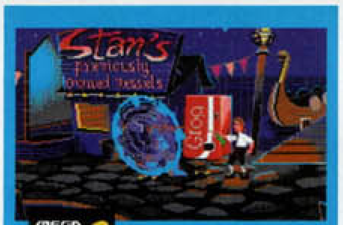
BAD THINGS ABOUT JOB: Long hours, long hours, and the large amount of hours you have to work. Oh yes, and the foul coffee from the drinks machine (it's free but they should be paying us).

ADVICE: Work for an insurance company for years, get incredibly depressed, end up living in the same house as someone currently working in the industry and bluff your way into a fab job.

No, seriously: get yourself a good working knowledge of English, know your games, then just go for it. Be confident, but more importantly be enthusiastic. Write to the editor of every mag you know, send them the best game review they've ever read (written by your good self, of course) and don't give up.

Jimmy's bus hits the road!

Not content with having two double-decker buses touring the country throughout the summer, Sega are hoping to get Jimmy's juggernaut on the road for a nationwide tour. Get the three together and it's Sega jollity ahoy! (Albeit in a Smokey-and-the-Bandit-meets-Cliff-Richard kind of a way.)



THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

(JVC)

The number one hit on all 16-bit computers should do the same on Mega CD. Text and graphics adventure that took the world by storm with amazing playability, devilish humour and real gaming challenge. More than just a straight copy, the CD game has real actors and comedians playing various parts, plus stacks of animation. Emphasis is on humour as pirate Guybrush Threepwood battles foes and uncovers dastardly plots – he even gets to squeeze in a few swordfights as well. If they've got it right, it's assured classic status.

So polish your cutlass, nick your granny's parrot and rehearse those pirate songs. You'll be needing them.

CHESS – A GAME OF 16 BITS

Well, on each side, anyway. But it cunningly develops a double meaning when you know that *Chessmaster*, the excellent Game Gear chess game, is soon to be converted for the Mega Drive. Featuring wacky graphics, sampled speech and a seriously brainy computer opponent, *Chessmaster* could just be the game to kickstart your brain back into gear after those prolonged coma-inducing bouts of alien laser death.

RED DWARF GEAR

WIN!

RED DWARF II
KRYTEN
RED DWARF II
STASIS LEAK
BACKWARDS
TIMESLIDES

No real reason for this competition, other than the fact that Grant Naylor (Red Dwarf's producers) were kind enough to offer us some kit to give away when we were fixing up the Kryten feature (see page 16).

A Red Dwarf T-shirt, six vids and a signed Red Dwarf photo go to the first reader to send us a photo of someone who looks like Rimmer. Send your photos to: "You know, I could have sworn I just saw Rimmer", MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW, to arrive before 30 October.

TO BE THIS GOOD TAKES AGES...

SEGA
PRO-MASTER
THE COMPLETE PLAYERS GUIDE
£2.99
SEGA PRO-MASTER
IAN LIVINGSTONE

– but it's quicker if you use the official Sega Pro-Master Tips Books. Or so say the book's publishers Simon and Schuster, anyway. But we've no reason to doubt them, as the books offer a bit of a barg to anyone completely, utterly and quite fantastically stuck in a game. £2.99 buys you one of four different editions – each containing three complete solutions for Game Gear, Master System and (yes!) Mega Drive.

The books are available in all good book stores or game shops, and MEGA recommends checking them out, even though Andy Smith (a name to strike awe and reverence into the soul of not only Neil, but any *Sega Power* reader) is responsible, if that's the word, for some of them.

The really great news, however, is that the book's publishers are coughing for the Game Gear that MEGA is offering as a prize for the best tips sent in each month. What generous souls, and what great books! (Ahem).

If the MEGA Medic can't help (he's on page 70), then you could always try the Pro-Master Tips Books

ESSENTIAL VIRGIN GEAR!

WIN!
gin games-
mmaculate
concepts

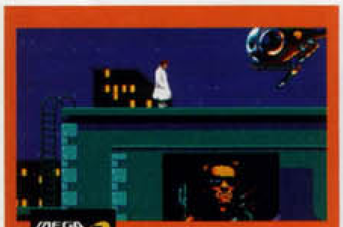
As a welcome present to all MEGA readers, Virgin Games have donated some excellent gear. We've got 100 (yes – one hundred) huge *Terminator* posters, five stylish Virgin games jackets and ten "Immaculate Conception" T-shirts just waiting to be sent out to, er – hang on... 115 readers. If you want to win one, just jot down a brief idea you'd like to see for a feature in a future edition of MEGA. Easy.

Send your entries on a postcard or a sealed envelope to: "The Immaculate Competition",

BATMAN RETURNS (Sega)

Much the same as the up-and-coming Mega Drive game of the same name (reviewed in MEGA next issue), this Mega CD version promises twice as fast game animation (not sure how they're going to do that: we'll wait and see), with full driving, Batski and even extra secret bonus levels. Holy CD ROM.

STOP PRESS! **Move up Batman, budge along Arnie – this bit is important: *Golden Axe III*, coming to a Mega Drive near you in spring '93**



TERMINATOR
(Virgin Games)

Not happy with just Mega Drive, Master System and Game Gear versions, Virgin also intend bringing *Terminator* to the Mega CD. But rather than just port over, they've added more levels, fantastic sound and digitised shots from the film – just what the reviewers ordered.

THE WORLD'S BEST SOCCER GAME GOES MEGA DRIVE!

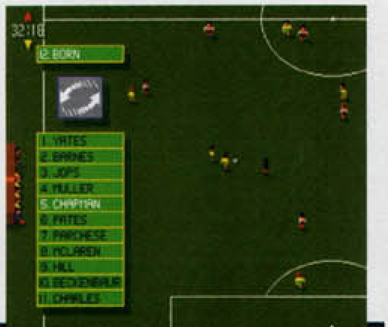
Sensible Software are the programming team behind *Sensible Soccer*. So what?

1) So, *Sensible Soccer* is the best footie game on the Amiga and on ST ever. Even better than *Kick-Off*, and that's praise indeed. It's sold by the bucketload and, in the words of Mark Ramshaw, editor of Amiga Power magazine, "it's probably the best two-player game in the world." So there you go.

2) Even more importantly, Sensible are working on a Mega Drive version.

No publishing deal has been signed yet, but the finished game will be snapped up faster than you can say "Jimmy Hill is a complete git (allegedly)".

Expect a full review some time way down the line...



Right: the world's best ever footy game
Below: Sensible Software (with one Captain Sensible)

Lock up your daughters! It's... the MENACER

It's dog eat dog in the console world and that means that when Nintendo release something new, you can bet your bum that Sega won't take long to counter it.

To prove that point all you have to do is take a look at the latest hardware accessory to come out of the Sega camp. It's called the Menacer and it's a light gun. It's due for release in the next two or three weeks, and it will cost you £60 for the full package including six games.

Now before you all start falling about laughing, there's one thing you'll need to know. This gun works! Yep I know it's a shock (nearly all the light guns ever released in the history of video gaming have been completely useless) but when Sega get behind a project as important as this you know the results are gonna be good.

Now the gun may be all fab and triff but without the games it's about as useful (or entertaining) as Bonny Langford on... well, just Bonny Langford really. But thankfully Sega bothered to put some time into making some decent games, and here we've got some real crackers. The first game stars those wacky characters, Toe Jam and Earl. This isn't exactly *Toe Jam And Earl 2* (that's due out early in '93), but merely a special light-gun-only game in which you must defend the sleepwalking heroes from getting hit by tomatoes. It's still a lot of fun, though, and the other five games included in the package look to be OK too.

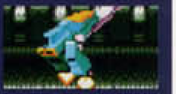
Reasons to be cheerful, part three: it looks like some software houses other than Sega will be jumping on board the Menacer bandwagon and start producing more games – the first of which is set to be the full arcade coin-op conversion of *Terminator 2* from Flying Edge.

INTRODUCING... THE Q'S IN THE NEWS!!!

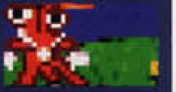
Do you know your Sega stuff? Put yourself to the test and flex that grey matter. Answers are on page 98, and your time starts... now.

1. What's the name of Joe Musashi's dog in *Shadow Dancer*?
2. How many ship pieces do Toe Jam and Earl need to find?
3. How many times does Dr Robotnik have his ship beaten up in *Sonic The Hedgehog*?
4. Which software house produced *Corporation*?
5. Was *Afterburner 2* ever a coin-op?
6. *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* was the follow up to a highly successful coin-op. What was the original called?
7. What's the name of the particularly "tasty" dwarf in *Golden Axe 2*?
8. Which of the following games does not give you the chance to play the part of a woman?
   - *Alisia Dragoon*
   - *Trouble Shooter*
   - *Streets Of Rage*
   - *Golden Axe 2*
   - *Alien Storm*
   - *Back To The Future 3*
   - *Phantasy Star 2*
   - *Ringside Angel*
9. *Jordan Versus Bird*. You know who they are – but what are their first names?
10. What's the name of the female rider in *Road Rash*?
11. And do you ever get to kiss her?
12. *Fatal Rewind* from EA is an old Amiga game. What was it called originally?
13. Tecmagik are making their Mega Drive debut next year with a tennis game. Which star is the game endorsed by?
14. Sega started out making TV sets. True – or is it in fact false?
15. Which of these games have never been included free with the Mega Drive?
   - *ESWAT*
   - *World Cup Italia '90*
   - *Olympic Gold*
   - *Sonic The Hedgehog*
   - *Altered Beast*

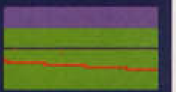
16. Which game is this (modified) screenshot from?



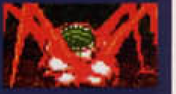
17. Which game is this (bodged around with) screenshot from?



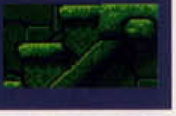
18. Which game is this (tweaked and scrunged) screenshot from?



19. Which game is this (decidedly BT – out of order) screenshot from?

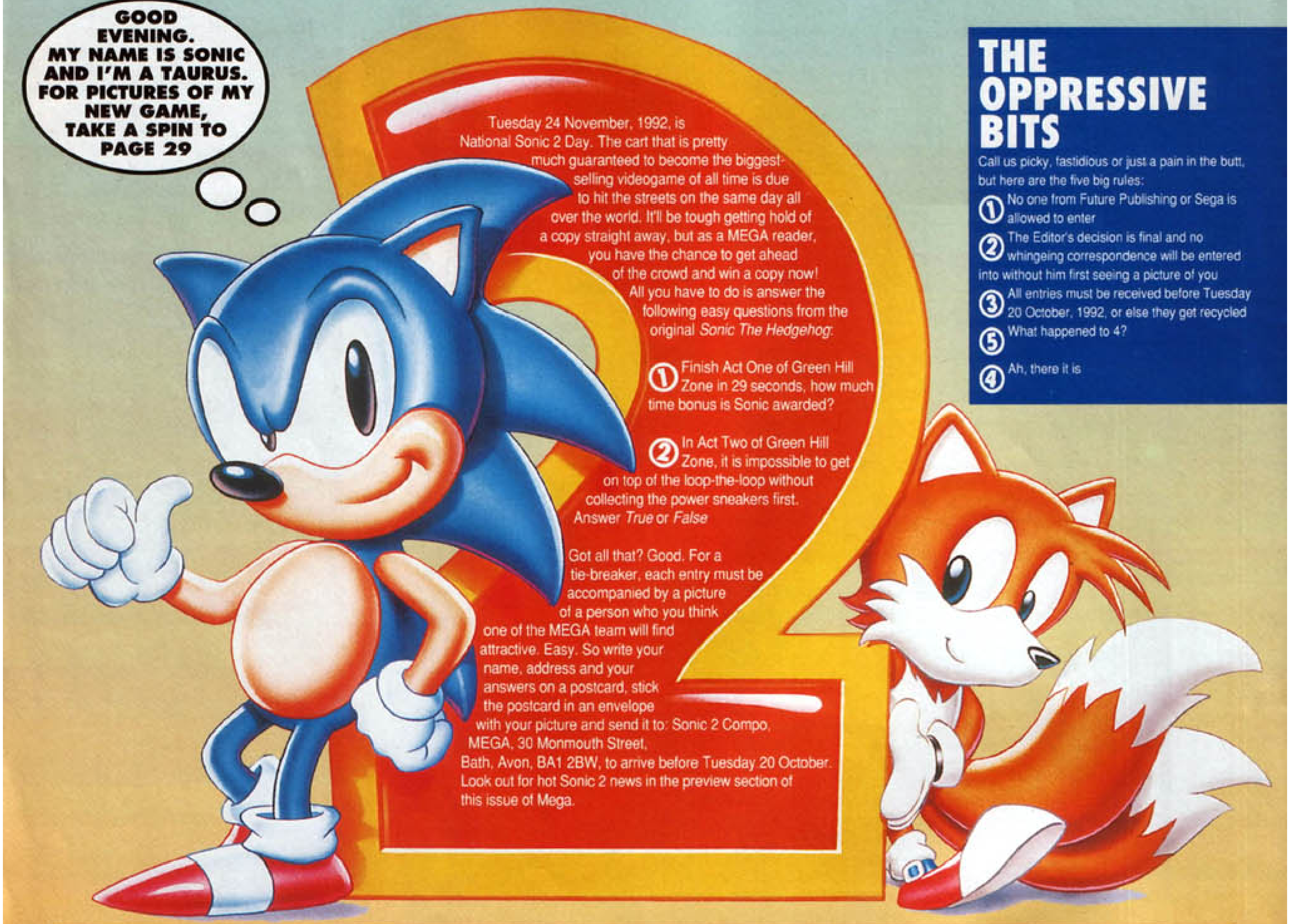


20. Which game is this (knackered, frankly) screenshot from?



WIN! SONIC 2

MEGA is giving away 50 of the first copies of Sonic 2 to be air-lifted into Europe! Enter this exclusive competition and one could be yours


GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS SONIC AND I'M A TAURUS. FOR PICTURES OF MY NEW GAME, TAKE A SPIN TO PAGE 29

Tuesday 24 November, 1992, is National Sonic 2 Day. The cart that is pretty much guaranteed to become the biggest-selling videogame of all time is due to hit the streets on the same day all over the world. It'll be tough getting hold of a copy straight away, but as a MEGA reader, you have the chance to get ahead of the crowd and win a copy now! All you have to do is answer the following easy questions from the original *Sonic The Hedgehog*:

① Finish Act One of Green Hill Zone in 29 seconds, how much time bonus is Sonic awarded?

② In Act Two of Green Hill Zone, it is impossible to get on top of the loop-the-loop without collecting the power sneakers first. Answer *True* or *False*

Got all that? Good. For a tie-breaker, each entry must be accompanied by a picture of a person who you think one of the MEGA team will find attractive. Easy. So write your name, address and your answers on a postcard, stick the postcard in an envelope with your picture and send it to: Sonic 2 Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW, to arrive before Tuesday 20 October. Look out for hot Sonic 2 news in the preview section of this issue of Mega.

THE OPPRESSIVE BITS

Call us picky, fastidious or just a pain in the butt, but here are the five big rules:

① No one from Future Publishing or Sega is allowed to enter

② The Editor's decision is final and no whingeing correspondence will be entered into without him first seeing a picture of you

③ All entries must be received before Tuesday 20 October, 1992, or else they get recycled

⑤ What happened to 4?

④ Ah, there it is

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ALIENS 3	35.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
AMERICAN GLADIATORS	35.00	24.00	18.00	OCT
AQUABATIC GAMES	30.00	22.00	16.00	SEP
ATOMIC RUNNER	35.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
BATMAN - RETURNS	35.00	27.00	21.00	OCT
BIO HAZARD BATTLE	35.00	24.00	18.00	NOV
BLACK CRYPT	40.00	27.00	21.00	DEC
BREACH	35.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
BULLS V LAKERS	35.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
CADASH	32.00	18.00	12.00	NEW
CAPTAIN AMERICA	35.00	24.00	18.00	OCT
CARMEN SANDIAGO II	35.00	26.00	20.00	SEP
CHAKANI	32.00	24.00	18.00	NOV
CHASE HQ	35.00	24.00	18.00	OCT
CHESTER CHEETAH	40.00	24.00	18.00	NOV
CHUCK ROCK	37.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
CYBER-CORP (CORPERATION)	37.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
DAVE ROBINSON BASKETBALL	35.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
DEATH DUEL	37.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
DESERT STRIKE	35.00	27.00	21.00	
DOUBLE DRAGON	30.00	18.00	12.00	SEP
DRAGONS FURY	32.00	21.00	15.00	NEW
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS	42.00	29.00	23.00	NEW
EA ICE HOCKEY	30.00	23.00	17.00	
EUROPEAN CUP SOCCER	35.00	26.00	20.00	NEW
EVANDER HOLYFIELD BOXING	32.00	25.00	19.00	NEW
EX MUTANTS	35.00	24.00	18.00	NOV
FLINTSTONES	32.00	24.00	18.00	NOV
GADGET TWINS	42.00	27.00	21.00	SEP
GREEN DOG	30.00	22.00	16.00	SEP
HIGH IMPACT	32.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
HIT THE ICE	32.00	17.00	11.00	NOV
HOME ALONE	30.00	21.00	15.00	NOV
INDIANA JONES	32.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
JORDON V BIRD	30.00	20.00	14.00	NEW
KID CHAMELEON	32.00	22.00	16.00	
LEADERBOARD GOLF	32.00	22.00	16.00	SEP
LEMMINGS	35.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
LITTLE MERMAID	35.00	27.00	21.00	DEC
LHX ATTACK CHOPPER	32.00	24.00	18.00	OCT
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE	32.00	25.00	19.00	NOV
MASTER OF MONSTER	40.00	27.00	21.00	NEW
METAL FANGS	32.00	26.00	20.00	NOV
MIGHT AND MAGIK III	35.00	26.00	20.00	NOV
NFL SPORTS FOOTBALL	35.00	26.00	20.00	SEP
NHPLPA HOCKEY	35.00	27.00	21.00	SEP
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POWERMONGER	32.00	26.00	20.00	NOV
PREDATOR II	32.00	24.00	18.00	OCT
QUAD CHALLENGE	35.00	20.00	14.00	NEW
RACE DRIVIN	35.00	24.00	18.00	DEC
RAILROAD TYCOON	35.00	24.00	18.00	SEP
RAMPART	30.00	20.00	14.00	SEP
ROAD RASH II	32.00	24.00	18.00	NOV
SIDE POCKET	32.00	22.00	16.00	SEP
SIMPSONS - SPACE MUTANTS	32.00	22.00	16.00	NEW
SIMPSONS - FUN HOUSE	32.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
SMASH TV	32.00	26.00	20.00	SEP
SOL-DEASE	40.00	27.00	21.00	NEW
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG II	35.00	27.00	21.00	NOV
SPLATTERHOUSE II	35.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
STAR ODYSSEY	40.00	23.00	17.00	NEW
STREETS OF RAGE II	40.00	28.00	22.00	DEC
STRIDER II	40.00	27.00	21.00	OCT
SUPER MONACO GP II	32.00	22.00	16.00	SEP
SUPERMAN	35.00	24.00	18.00	DEC
TALESPIN	30.00	24.00	18.00	OCT
TAZMANIA	32.00	25.00	19.00	NEW
TERMINATOR	35.00	27.00	21.00	NEW
TERMINATOR II ARCADE	32.00	26.00	20.00	DEC
TERMINATOR II JUDGEMENT	32.00	26.00	20.00	DEC
TWISTED FLIPPER	30.00	21.00	15.00	SEP
TWO CRUDE DUDES	32.00	25.00	19.00	
WARRIOR OF ROME II	40.00	26.00	20.00	NEW
WONDERBOY MONSTER WORLD	35.00	24.00	18.00	NEW
X-MEN	35.00	24.00	18.00	DEC
YOUNG INDIANA JONES	30.00	26.00	20.00	NOV
ZOMBIE HIGH	30.00	21.00	15.00	NOV

GAMEGEAR

TITLE	NEW	SECONDHAND SELL	SECONDHAND BUY	DUE
ALIEN 3	25.00	18.00	14.00	OCT
AERIEL ASSAULT	20.00	14.00	10.00	NEW
AXE BATTLER	20.00	14.00	10.00	
BATMAN II	22.00	18.00	14.00	SEP
BATTER UP	20.00	14.00	10.00	
BERLIN WALL	20.00	14.00	10.00	
CHAKAN	20.00	16.00	12.00	DEC
CHASE HQ	22.00	16.00	12.00	
CHESSMASTER	20.00	14.00	10.00	
CHUCK ROCK	20.00	16.00	12.00	DEC
CLUTCH HITTER	20.00	14.00	10.00	
COLUMNS	20.00	12.00	8.00	
CRYSTAL WARRIORS	25.00	16.00	12.00	
DAVE ROBINSON BASKETBALL	22.00	18.00	14.00	OCT
DEFENDERS OF OASIS	25.00	18.00	14.00	NOV
DEVILISH	20.00	14.00	10.00	
DONALD DUCK	25.00	18.00	14.00	
DOUBLE DRAGON	22.00	18.00	14.00	DEC
DRAGON CRYSTAL	20.00	12.00	8.00	
EVANDER HOLYFIELDS BOXING	22.00	18.00	14.00	DEC
FACTORY PANIC	17.00	10.00	6.00	
FANTASY ZONE	20.00	14.00	10.00	NEW
FROGGER	17.00	12.00	8.00	
G.P. RIDER	20.00	16.00	12.00	DEC
G-LOC	22.00	14.00	10.00	
GADGET TWINS	22.00	16.00	12.00	SEP
GEORGE FORMANS KO BOXING	22.00	14.00	10.00	NEW
HALLEY WARS	20.00	14.00	10.00	
HOME ALONE	22.00	14.00	10.00	NOV
INDIANA JONES	25.00	18.00	14.00	SEP
JOE MONTANA	22.00	14.00	10.00	
LEADERBOARD GOLF	22.00	16.00	12.00	
LITTLE MERMAID	22.00	18.00	14.00	DEC
MARBLE MADNESS	22.00	14.00	10.00	SEP
MICKEY MOUSE	22.00	16.00	12.00	
NINJA GAIDEN	25.00	16.00	12.00	
OLYMPIC GOLD	25.00	18.00	14.00	NEW
OUTRUN	20.00	14.00	10.00	
OUTRUN EUROPA	25.00	18.00	14.00	NEW
PACMAN	22.00	14.00	10.00	
PAPERBOY	22.00	14.00	10.00	SEP
PHANTASY STAR	25.00	18.00	14.00	DEC
PRINCE OF PERSIA	22.00	16.00	12.00	SEP
PSYCHIC WORLD	20.00	12.00	8.00	
PUT AND PUTTER	20.00	12.00	8.00	
RAMPART	22.00	14.00	10.00	NOV
SHINOBI	22.00	14.00	10.00	
SHINOBI II	22.00	16.00	12.00	DEC
SIMPSONS	25.00	20.00	16.00	SEP
SLIDER	22.00	12.00	8.00	
SMASH TV	25.00	18.00	14.00	SEP
SOLATAIRE POKER	20.00	12.00	8.00	
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	22.00	14.00	10.00	
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG II	22.00	18.00	14.00	NOV
SPACE HARRIER	22.00	14.00	10.00	
SPIDERMAN	25.00	18.00	14.00	NEW
STREETS OF RAGE	22.00	18.00	14.00	NOV
STRIDER II	25.00	18.00	14.00	OCT
SUPER GOLF	22.00	16.00	12.00	
SUPER KICK OFF	25.00	20.00	16.00	
SUPER MONACO	20.00	12.00	8.00	
SUPER MONACO II	22.00	18.00	14.00	NEW
SUPER OFF ROAD	22.00	18.00	14.00	DEC
TALESPIN	22.00	16.00	12.00	NOV
TAZMANIA	22.00	18.00	14.00	OCT
TERMINATOR II - ARCADE	25.00	18.00	14.00	DEC
WIMBLEDON TENNIS	20.00	14.00	10.00	SEP
WONDERBOY	20.00	14.00	10.00	
WOODY POP	20.00	12.00	8.00	
YOUNG INDY	25.00	18.00	14.00	OCT

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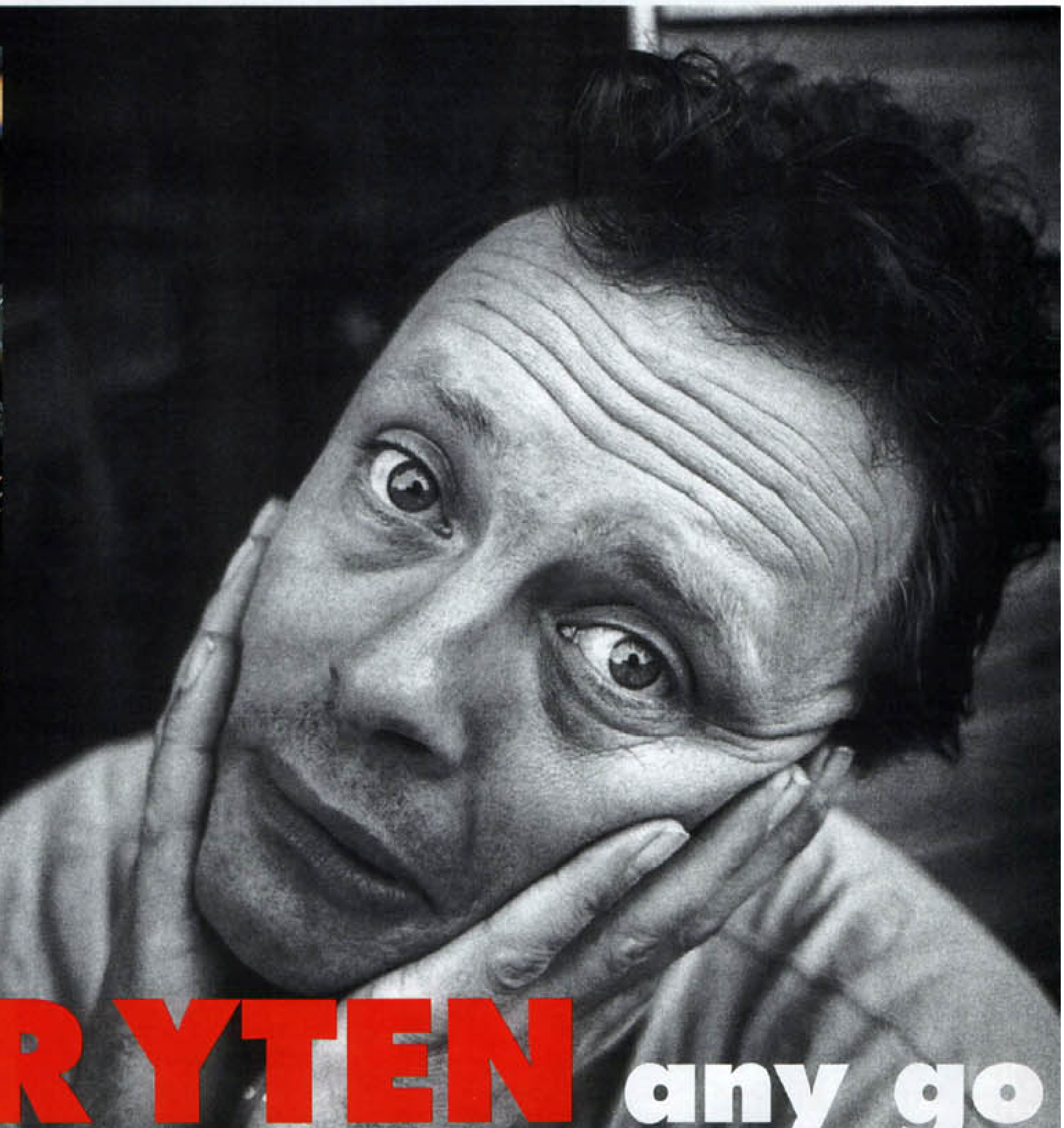
Cult BBC2 TV space comedy *Red Dwarf* is watched by more than 6.5 million vi as many as *Gamesmaster*. Everyone *knows* that Kryten the droid can hoover w but, in the first of a series of interviews in which TV celebrities try their hands Neil West proposes a very different challenge...

Robert Llewellyn as he appears in *Red Dwarf*. Officially named Kryten, the service-droid is, however, more often than not referred to as "novelty condom head". The MEGA team haven't the faintest idea why...



Is KRYTEN any go THUNDERFORC or wha

ewers – that's twice ith his groinal socket at Mega Drive games, od at E III, t?

Famous people playing semi-relevant games. Kryten the *Red Dwarf* service-droid *should* be able to pilot a spaceship, shouldn't he?

Robert Llewellyn is the man behind the Kryten mask and, sitting in front of a Mega Drive where he's about to embark on a laser-death propelled romp through the swarming aliens of *Thunderforce III*, he's grinning like a maniac. Every few seconds Robert's face contorts into some ludicrous expression and Kryten rears his novelty condom-shaped head to start fussing…

"Have I got to shoot that thi… ah. Oh dear. Yes, maybe it would have been better if I'd shot it. Hmm. I'll get him next time. Oh! How do I get past this thing?" Etc, etc.

It's an incredible voice, and one that Robert seemingly can't help slipping into. In between blasting ambassadors of the Lomian Empire into oozy lumps of photon-death, he explains where the accent came from.

"It's my version of Canadian. I lived in Vancouver for a while and people would say, 'Ra-bert, would you like to go oat toe-night?'. Oat toe-night! I mean, really. They made me laugh so much every time they spoke that I had to use their accent.

"So Kryten is a mixture of Lloydd Grossman, a Scotsman and a Canadian. There are even bits of Scandinavian in there as well. I started off doing a lot of that, but it drove everyone crazy so I stopped.

"But the idea was to make him different from other robots. If he'd been a posh, bungling English character, he would have appeared just like C3PO or Marvin the Paranoid Android from *The Hitchiker's Guide*. There are a lot of twitching, nervous, *English* robots around – 'Oh, excuse me sir,' and all that. It also comes down to how the Kryten mask restricts my mouth; you can't help talking funny in a rubber balaclava."

You can't help talking funny in a rubber balaclava…

Back to the challenge in question…

A particularly resilient (not to say hard) ambassador of the Lomian Empire manages to take out Kryten's first ship – Robert 32: Aliens 1. "Oh humbug!" exclaims Robert. (Ah ha, maybe Kryten isn't going to be any good at *Thunderforce III* at all?)

So is the costume a pain to wear?

"Yup, a deep pain for all concerned. I'm completely covered from head to foot in heavy, thick rubber. It takes two and a half hours to make up, which thankfully is a great improvement on the five hours it took during the first series.

"There's a drainage channel down the back of the costume because my face can't sweat, and I'm er, a sweaty kind of guy. So everything sticks together and goes *shhiwurp* when I pull the mask off at the end."

Oh dear, it doesn't sound very pleasant at all. How do you, you know, er… go to the little boys' room?

"It takes a long, long time. But if you sweat that much, then you tend not to go. It's amazing, I drink about four or five big bottles of Evian a day and God knows how much else, but I never pee! In the evening I nip to the loo, go *plut* and think, 'is that it?'. Pathetic.

Good grief. It would seem that being a TV star isn't all about earning lots of cash and being pursued down the street by masses of adoring women. Does Robert even get recognised in real life?

"Yes, but it's really only started this year, since I appeared with my real head. Even then it always seems to be when I'm hungover, my flies are undone and I've got a bloody great bogey hanging out of my nose."

Meanwhile…

Robert's Styx's spaceship meets the Gargoyle at the end of Hydra level. Once again Robert mutates into Kryten and the battle commences… "take that, you evil scum".

Whoops, the Robert/Kryten team came off second best, so it's back to the start. Time to find out how Robert joined the *Red Dwarf* crew…

"I've been a writer and a performer for 15 years (I've worked with Rory Bremner and I've just finished a series of *Bottom*) but the one thing that got me the role of Kryten was a show I did in Edinburgh in 1988 about a robot that was made by a woman. It was meant to be the perfect man but it went wrong. It er... bonked the furniture and er… things. It had a *lust mode* fitted and it went… well... it went apeshit, really."

Lust mode sounds like something that Kryten might have installed, with horrendous consequences no doubt?

"Well this was before Kryten existed. But yes, there are a lot of similarities between the two characters. The robot I played on stage, however, was seen by Paul Jackson, the producer of *Red Dwarf*, and he gave me the part of Kryten."

After watching you (ahem) the furniture? What an audition.

"Yes, teehee. I replaced David Ross as Kryten, who was later to reappear in *Red Dwarf* as the voice of Talkie Toaster. He was very, very funny. 'Given that God is infinite, and that the universe is also infinite, would you like a crumpet?' and all that."

Will Talkie Toaster return?

"It's possible, but in the last episode we smashed him to bits to give Holly his intelligence circuits. Then he got blown up."

Thundering on…

The Gargoyle at the end of the level is still proving to be a tough opponent, but then Robert *does* have to keep talking. What does he think of *Thunderforce III* then?

"It's excellent, but not as good as *Rear Gunner*, a game I used to play in the arcades. It put you in the back seat of a Lancaster bomber. I had the knack of beating it and used to get massive scores.

"I'm also a real fan of flight simulators. I used to have this excellent sim on my Apple Mac and when you crashed, it used to tell you how many people died.

"My best ever effort was when I fudged a landing in Hong Kong, took out a couple of tower blocks and killed over nine hundred people! It gave me a whole rundown of the injuries which people had suffered."

Surely Kryten wouldn't be into anything so bloodthirsty?

"No, Kryten would be crap at video games because he'd find them too aggressive. But Kryten's been getting harder as the series' progress."

Is the sixth series on its way?

"Yes, filming of *Red Dwarf VI* will start in January, ready to be broadcast in the spring. It only takes up eight weeks of actual time a year, but then it takes me about another five weeks to recover afterwards.

"But it's so much fun to do. All of us have come from similar comedy backgrounds and we all write a lot of our own material, so we're all constantly in hysterics. Like when Craig (Lister) kept telling the audiences that the guy who does the warm-up for the live *Red Dwarf* shows is the guy who plays Ronald McDonald in the TV ads. We all thought it was funny, but *Ronald* got really pissed off."

How about a *Red Dwarf* film?

"It's always being talked about, but so far nothing concrete has come of it. Certainly *Red Dwarf* has got to be the sitcom with the highest chance of being made into a movie."

But for the moment, you're happy to keep playing the role of Kryten on TV?

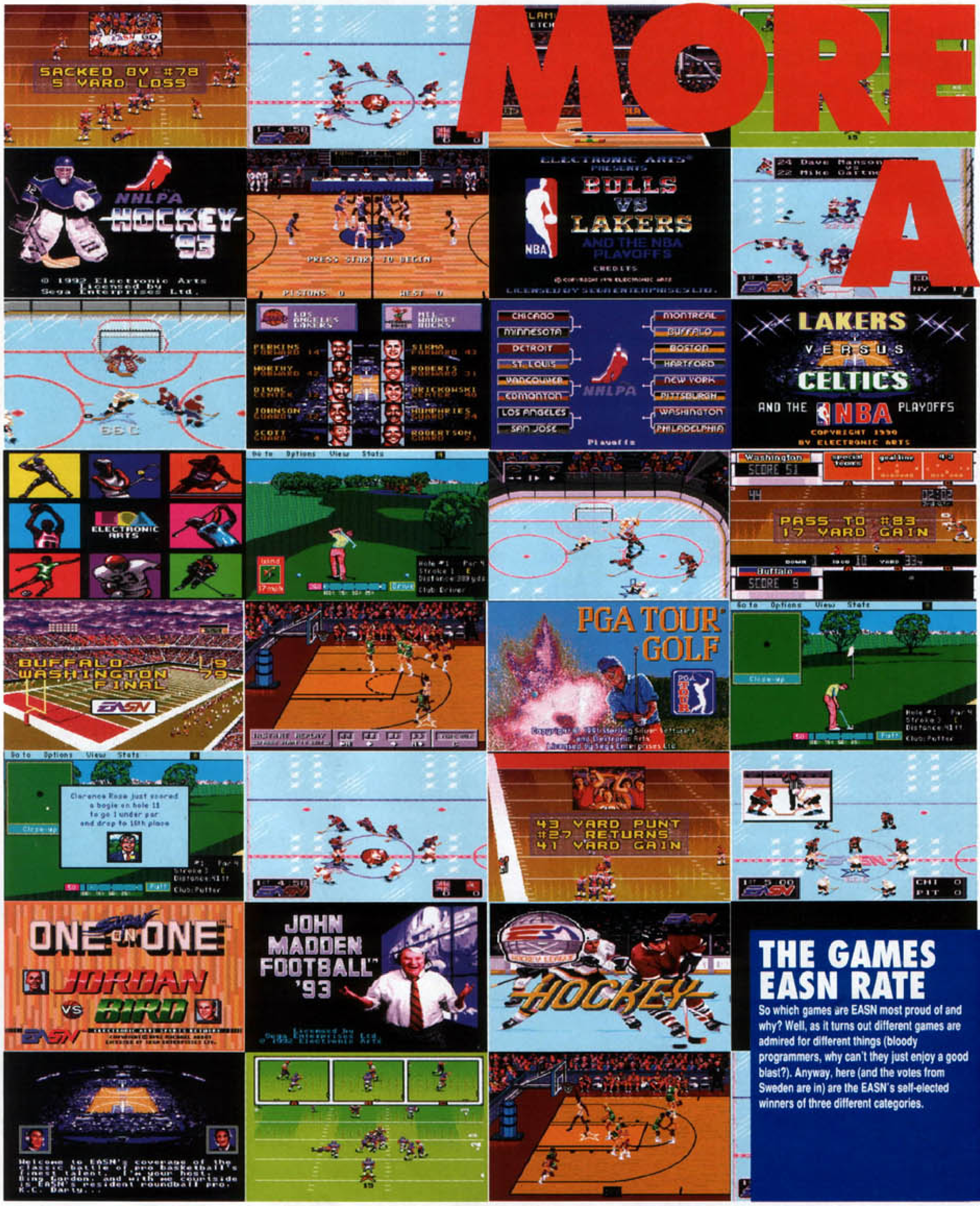
"Oh yes, I love him. I've always been given such brilliant lines, even when they're just scientific explanations of what's going on."

Back to the Gargoyle again, and still no joy. Well, MEGA got the answer to the question we were really asking – Kryten is completely crap at *Thunderforce III*. But who will it be in the hot seat next month? Find out on 15 October. ●

Don't miss the Red Dwarf competition in the news section of this launch issue of MEGA!

Robert Llewellyn is more at home with a decent flight sim than a full-effect shoot-em-up. But there's no wriggling out of the challenge

MORE A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JORDAN VS BIRD
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93
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HOCKEY
Welcome to EASN's coverage of the classic battle of pro basketball's finest talent. I'm your host, Ring Gordon, and with me courtside is EASN's resident roundball pro, K.C. Darty...

THE GAMES EASN RATE

So which games are EASN most proud of and why? Well, as it turns out different games are admired for different things (bloody programmers, why can't they just enjoy a good blast?). Anyway, here (and the votes from Sweden are in) are the EASN's self-elected winners of three different categories.

THAN JUST GAME...

Don Transeth, boss of EASN

Ever wondered how EASN make their sports sims so good? Neil West spoke to Don Transeth the executive director of EASN to find out just how the company set about creating a rootin-tootin', run-and-shootin', jock strappin' sports masterpiece

OK gang, so this is the plan. You've got this amazing idea for a sports game right? But how the hell do you turn your idea into a genuine, 8Mbit cartridge? Well MEGA has come up with the goods. MEGA (with not inconsiderable help from EASN in the USA) has come up with a list of 12 things you'll need to make that dream game come true.

So come now with MEGA and Don Transeth to find out what you have to do to get an EASN game from the playing field to a Mega Drive cartridge. Ready? Let's go...

YOU WILL NEED:

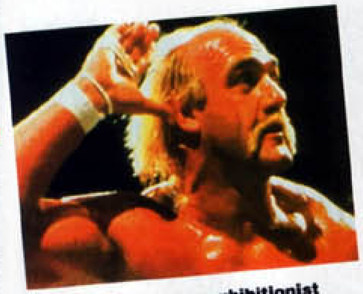
1. A "WINDOW" OF UP TO FOUR YEARS IN YOUR DIARY

No problem. Get the neighbour to look after the cat, stock up with baked beans and let's get to it. *EA Hockey* only took 18 months to complete, and even if you go for a four year epic like *John Madden Football*, remember, Rome wasn't built in a day.

2. A REALLY TRIFF IDEA FOR A SPORTS GAME

OK. Bicycle pole-vaulting – a sure-fire winner, right Don?

"No. It has to be a real sport. Now that may seem obvious, but it can be a big question. Like pro wrestling in the States, for example. It's not a sport, it's more of an exhibition. The only people who really believe it's a competitive sport are the people who still believe in Santa Claus. An EASN game mustn't lose track of reality."



Pro Wrestling – one exhibitionist 'sport' not suited to the EASN

Ah... so bicycle pole-vaulting is out then?

"Every EASN game has to have the following ingredients: real teams, real players, real strategies and a mass following. Without these elements it won't even be considered for transforming into a video game."

OK, we're flexible, let's try motor racing instead. Next?

3. A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR PRODUCTION AND DESIGN ESTABLISHMENT

Ah... (again). Er, Don?

4. THE BACKING OF ELECTRONIC ARTS

"Take your dream game to the EASN panel. It's a very brutal process – there will be about 20 or 30 people sitting there picking your ideas and dreams to bits. It's easy to come away from it feeling badly wounded and bruised. Everyone is very open, no one pulls any punches and in that one session it's decided whether the project will be given the go ahead or not."

OK, so assuming we sell the idea well enough and get the backing, EASN will provide all the technical gear, the marketing expertise and the money up front. Sounds good to us, next...

5. A GAME SCRIPT

"Films have screenplays, songs have scores and plays have scripts. Video games are just the same. This is where all the dreams and ambitions get put on paper. The product manager..." (and as far as our feature's concerned, that's us, that is) "...creates what he believes is the best video game possible using the technology and resources available."

Well we want to make a motor racing game.

"So how will the game look? How will the player control the action? What game options will be available? How will the players move? How big will the sprites be?"

No problems Don, our imaginations are

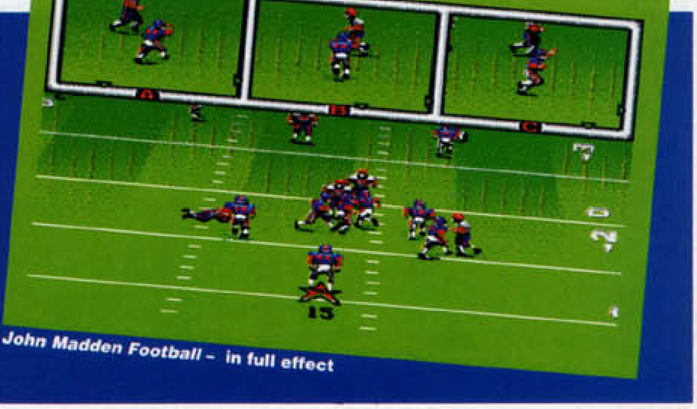
① TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE:

The winner...? Gorgeous, pouting, *John Madden Football*

"Purely because there are 22 players on the field at any given point in time. Each of those players is an individual, modelled on a real-life character. John Madden's philosophy is that football is not strictly a team sport, but a series of one-on-one match-ups: each offensive player is pitted against his opposite number on the defense. Their stats are compared and the outcome will have a bearing on each team's performance as a whole – the computer's game plan is co-ordinated as a result of this."

"So as an example of technical excellence and programming achievement – in terms of the amount of stuff that's going on in there and on the graphical side of things – then *John Madden Football* has to be one of the best games Electronic Arts has ever made. That Mega Drive is just *cooking* inside."

Don Transeth, Executive Director, EASN



John Madden Football – in full effect

in top gear. We want (deep breath, check this out): digitised images of the cars; constant "sports-talk" commentary from Murray Walker and James Hunt; driving realism as spot-on as in *Hard Drivin'*; the speed of *Road Rash*; a full driver's championship season option; the chance to upgrade your cars; different action replay camera angles to view crashes; and daring overtaking manoeuvres; and... well, that'll do.

What's next then?

6. TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

A reality check, it would appear. Oh dear – maybe we were a bit ambitious. Be gentle with us Don...

"OK, so you've got all your ideas down on paper and you take it into a TDR and they'll say something like, 'you have a dandy plan for a game, BUT let's get real about what you can and can't do. How are you going to allocate your cart space? You can't do all these things at once – maybe we should go to a bigger cart size? Etc etc'."

So all our ideas get shot down in flames then?

"Well, an experienced product manager will have had a firmer understanding of what was possible in the first place, but yes – the TDR is a technical reality check and can be one of the most disenchanting and disconcerting experiences going. The whole process is humbling from start to finish. But the producer should also be pushing the barriers of what's possible, so if everything he's planned is OK'd without question, then maybe he's not pushing the technology hard enough."

So what we're left with now is a plan for a game that is well structured, definitely possible and ready for development. So it may be a, – oh, how shall we say it? – "pruned" version of our original, all-singing, all-dancing race game, but it's still got the potential to be a classic. Time, wethinks, to get a team together...

8. THE TEAM: A SPORTS EXPERT

We all roughly know the ropes of a game, right? I'm sure every reader of MEGA could explain the rules of soccer, for example. But it's the specialist knowledge that makes EASN games a cut above the rest. So how is it done?

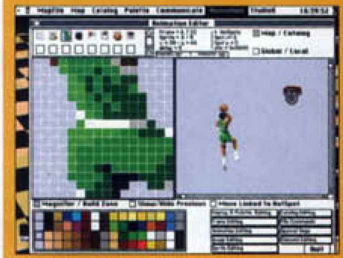
"We use genuine play diagrams from genuine teams and then use specialist knowledge to refine this. As time goes on and technology improves, we're hoping to become more and more stylised – leading to a virtual reality of the game in question.

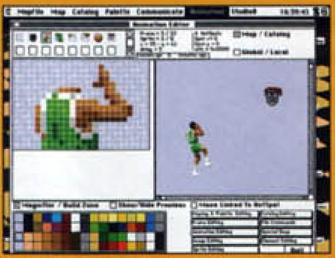
"John Madden's own coaching playbook was used for *John Madden Football* and the hockey games were based on the knowledge of a professional hockey scout, who was working for the Winnipeg Jets. It's his job to scout all the other teams and know exactly how all the other players in all the other teams are performing, so he was an ideal source of information for putting the teams together in *NHLPA Hockey*.

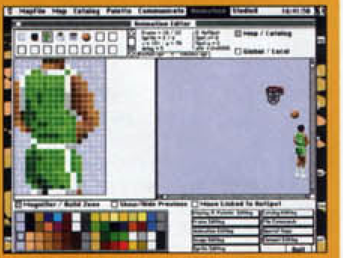
"Basketball works more quantitatively. We were given complete access to the National Basketball Association (NBA) stats, so we know what all the shooting percentages are from the floor, what the shooting percentages are from the free throws and how many rebounds a player is likely to get throughout the course of a game for a whole season. All these stats, facts and figures are modelled into the program.

"The signature moves and all the 'extras' that the fans like to see came straight from the TV. The NBA record every play of every game and catalogue them on a computer. So I can call them up and say, 'OK, so we want to see Michael Jordan

7. THE TEAM: A GRAPHICS EXPERT


EASN artists and designers work with sophisticated Apple Macintosh computers to create the players. They look pretty crap close-up...


But when they're displayed at real-game size and all the steps of animation are complete, then the skill of the artists can be seen


Most Mega Drive developers use PCs to program their games. A kit can cost as little as £2000, but using it, well – that's a bit tougher

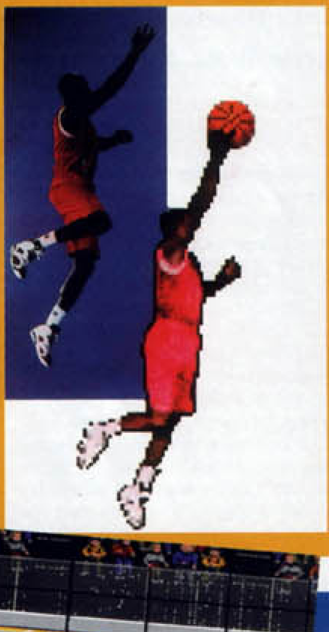
When operating on the sort of scale that EASN does, programming a game is not just a one-man job, and perhaps the most important job is that of designing and implementing the graphics.

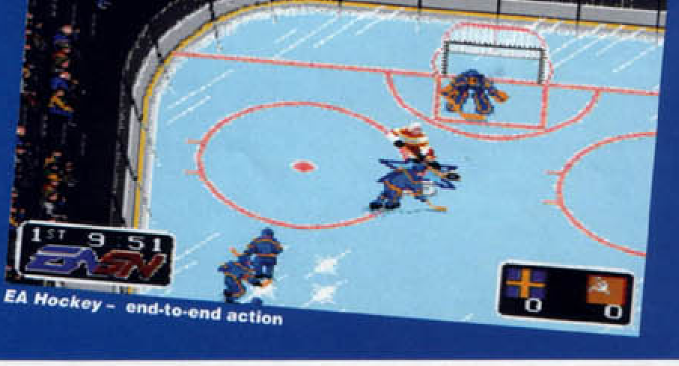
Doing any sort of programming on the Mega Drive involves a complicated and expensive PC system at the very least. EASN use Apple Macintoshs (the same ones which we at MEGA use – Ed) to design the sprites. But how do the experts know what to aim for? And how do the games end up looking so realistic? Over to you Don...

"This level of sophistication and accuracy comes from people who truly love the sports. If you're a real hockey fan, then there are some things that you just don't have to learn – you already know. Otherwise, it's a matter of reviewing TV broadcasts, magazine articles or interviewing specialists. Basically, it all revolves around either knowing the game back to front or just doing your homework properly.

"*Jordan Flight* on the PC used digitised images. The Mega Drive isn't capable of this just yet but we're working on it. We're also working with a Mega CD – there's a lot more potential for this sort of thing. But unfortunately, we're not allowed to talk about these projects just yet."

Shame. OK, so the graphics are in place. But what are you going to do with them? They may run as smoothly as silk, but what's the point of that if they don't know where to run to? What we need now guv, is a second specialist... a sports expert!


Michael Jordan at full stretch, alongside digitised PC game character. EASN are currently experimenting with the use of digitised images in Mega CD games. They're also developing with the MEGA CD – we can expect results next year



EA Hockey – end-to-end action

② ADRENALINE-PUMPING GAMEPLAY:

And the winner... *EA Hockey*

"The rhythm and the pacing are completely accurate – there's a lot of action. The sound FX are spot on and people who are not hockey fans still enjoy the game immensely. It also translates well as a sport into a video game: there's action, there's strategy and there's a good pay-off when a goal is scored – with the siren and the players' reaction. In terms of pure enjoyment, it's second to none."

Even though (in my opinion) the game's too much down to luck?

"That's a fair criticism but in *NHLPA Hockey* that element's been taken out to a large degree with smarter goalies and sharper computer players. It's now a lot more down to a player's ability."

Don Transeth, Executive Director, EASN

playing at home against the Boston Celtics, and we'd like to see him do a series of three point jumps from last season,' and they'll get it for me. From these we can make sure our representations of all the signature moves and player movements are spot-on."

Game design? Check. Graphics? Sorted. Game logic? In the can (man). All we need now are some sounds...

9. THE TEAM: A MUSICIAN

Rob Hubbard (a Yorkshire man, who's been living in sunny Californ-i-a for the last four years – lucky man) is the musician responsible for all the tumpin' tunes and FX on *John Madden Football*, *EA Hockey*, *PGA Tour Golf* and *Bulls Vs Lakers* (to name just four), so it's a fair chance that he would be available to lend his services to our project. How would he go about composing a "motor racing" anthem? And what about the effects? Let's see what he has to say...

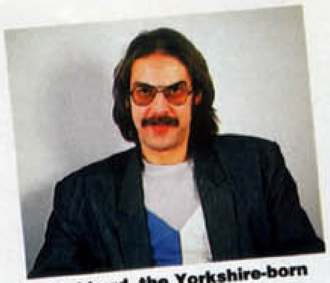
"You must firstly research how the sport is presented by the media in the USA – that's really important. So, for example, a golf game would be very different to a basketball game in tone. And a football game would be different again, because it's a lot more physical. The cable network is very influential, we try to copy that sort of genre.

"As for FX, we have a CD library full of samples and we can also go out with a DAT recorder to tape ourselves some genuine samples from real games. The FM chip in the Mega Drive is great, so we can make up some of the FX we need ourselves. Basically, it's a compromise between what you want to achieve and what space you've been allocated."

OK, so let's (hypothetically) put our game on the Mega CD. Soundtrack sorted. Yes?

"The problem with the Mega CD is that the laser pick-up can't be at two places at the same time, so you can't have a full-blown CD soundtrack and retrieve game data at the same time – despite what many people think."

Oh, well – worth a try. We'll put up with an ordinary Mega Drive soundtrack for now – no probs.



Rob Hubbard, the Yorkshire-born musician responsible for *John Madden Football* and *EA Hockey*

So the game is taking shape. But don't think that as product manager (that's us, etc) you get a completely free reign. As soon as things are starting to take shape, and as soon as a semi-playable demo is up and running, it's time for...

10. THE ALPHA VERSION!

OK, let's go, we're right on top of things, roll on that alpha version and we'll take it on the chin...

What's an alpha version, Don?

"This is basically an un-finished, but playable version of the finished product. OK, so it's not real pretty but it's the first chance we get to see how the players move and how they interface with the player. Seeing the alpha version is the first real indication as to how the finished game is going to turn out."

So all the top bods at EASN then get to take a look at what you've been getting up to, and suggest improvements, modifications and tweaks. These are taken on board and it's time to start polishing and fine-tuning the beast towards a finished game. Part and parcel of this process is... the EASN branding treatment (ie no. 11).

12. THE ABILITY TO TAKE FAILURE ON THE CHIN...

Of course, even EASN aren't guaranteed success time after time. Don is up front about admitting EASN's failures as well as showing off its successes...

"We haven't managed to get baseball right yet. We've had a couple of passes at it but in the end we've had to kill the product because it just didn't make the grade. It wasn't as good as our other games were in their respective sports – and the moment we release a sub-standard game we leave ourselves open to all sorts of attack.

"A game will be killed if it fails on any of the following (and a whole lot more) criteria: the players don't move fast enough; the player interface isn't instinctive enough; the graphics don't move very well; or the players are too small. Sometimes it's impossible to tell until right at the end whether a game's going to make it or not."

But assuming your game has been completed according to plan and everything works as it should (and only a prolonged period of games-testing and analysis can determine this) then you have a winner.

EASN's and Electronic Arts marketing department now take hold of the new game, the packaging is designed, a marketing strategy is decided upon and (after getting the go ahead from Sega themselves) the game reaches the shops.

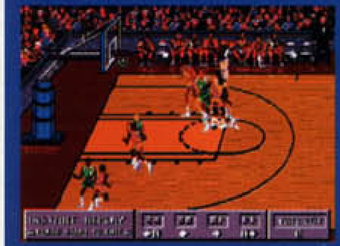
WHAT ABOUT OUR MOTOR RACING GAME THEN?

OK, so we only used a motor racing game as an example, but as it happens (slipping into Jimmy Saville mode for just this one sentence) EASN *are* currently working on such a title. Let's hope it's as good as all the others.

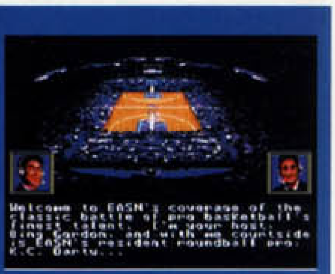
Ⓜ *Neil West*

11 THE EASN BRANDING TREATMENT

Action replay, sophisticated intros, commentaries using real (100% genuine article) commentators and extra stats – they're in all the new EASN games. OK, so they look good, but why are they so important?



EVERY new EASN game features an action replay feature



Welcome to EASN's coverage of the classic battle of pro basketball's finest talent. I'm your host, Bing Gordon, and with me courtside is EASN's resident roundball pro, K.C. Bartu...

And EVERY new EASN game is presented by a TV commentator

"TV orientation has become more important because most people cannot actually attend sports meetings due to geographical, financial or just sheer practical reasons. So they end up watching it on TV and it just so happens that the video game plugs into the same machine, so it helps us create the fantasy that the video game is the real thing if we do our best to imitate the TV presentation."

Consider it in.

FUTURE GAMES FROM EASN

ELECTRONIC ARTS

MEGA can exclusively reveal that EASN are currently working on a baseball game (expect it in the spring), a soccer game, a motor racing game and a motorcycle racing game. All these games are still in their infancy, however, so there's no chance of any screenshots or previews. But you can guarantee that MEGA will be the first to get the news to you as soon as there's anything to report. Stay tuned, sports fans.

③ SPORTING REALISM:

Here they come, it's... *Bulls vs Lakers Basketball*

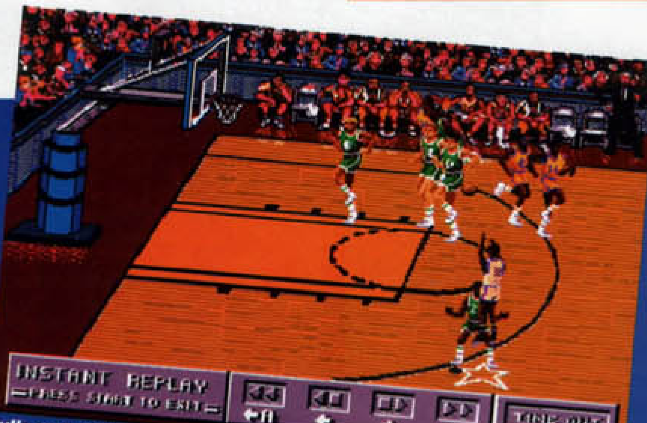
"For two reasons: firstly, the rhythm and the tempo of the game is spot-on and, as a basketball player, you're confident that the moves you make and the passes you make are the right ones. To a real player, everything's very instinctive.

"Secondly, of all the games we've done it has the most distinctive signature moves. The air reverse that Michael Jordan used in the playoffs two years ago is recreated perfectly. All a player has to do is get the right character in the right place at the right time and he is rewarded with these fantastic moves that are very representative of the real sport.

"It's all pure showmanship, but it adds individuality and attitude. We worked really hard to capture this, and we believe that its success is a direct result."

Don Transeth, Executive Director, EASN

So there we have it. EASN's favourite, er... EASN games. Big heads.



***Bulls vs Lakers* – real atmosphere**

THE BIG COMPETITION PAGE WITH THE BIGGEST PRIZES

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THE CHARTS

A statistician can put his head in an oven, his feet in a freeze-box, and can still tell you he's feeling normal. Anyway, here are the MEGA charts, both official and import

OFFICIAL TOP 10

***Taz-Mania* on top of both charts**

This month	Last month	Game Name	Position in Top 100
1	■ (01)	**Taz-Mania** Sega hit the jackpot with the most excellent adventures of the Tasmanian Devil	◎ 19
2	▲ (04)	**Super Monaco GP2** Test your driving skills to the limit with Sega's unbeatable Formula One race game	◎ 5
3	▼ (02)	**Olympic Gold** Reckon you could be the next Daley Thompson? Then may we suggest you start training here	◎ 42
4	▼ (03)	**Desert Strike** Politically unsound, morally dodgy, internationally unfriendly and territorially hostile. But great fun	◎ 15
5	(NE)	**Euro Club Soccer** Not the greatest game in the world, but it's still the Mega Drive's best footy game. This is why it sells	◎ 73
6	(NE)	**Terminator** Only four levels, but they're great to play and look lovely. The Mega CD version should be bigger	◎ 36
7	▲ (09)	**EA Hockey** Read the world exclusive review of *NHLPA Hockey* on page 32 of this very magazine	◎ 2
8	▲ (14)	**WC Italia '90** And the WC is probably the best place to put this fantastically appaling footy game	◎ -
9	▼ (05)	**Road Rash** Rubber burning hilarity with clubs, kicks, punches and babes. Truly a great game	◎ 8
10	▼ (06)	**Streets Of Rage** OK, so it may be easy to finish. But the competitive two-player action ensures long-term appeal. Fab	◎ 6

For MEGA's full Top 100 listing start at page 76

SOLD!

MEGA gets a perverse sort of pleasure from snapping Sega shoppers (especially the one at the bottom)

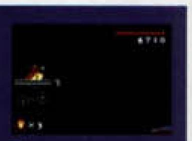
Assam. Age: 26
Game: *Splatterhouse 2*

Oliver. Age: 16
Game: *ESWAT*

Desmond. Age: 34
Game: *PGA Tour Golf*

Abigail. Age: 22
Game: *F22 Interceptor*

IMPORT TOP 10



Taz on a one-way trip to pain

This month	Game Name	Position in Top 100
1	**Taz-Mania** A popular one, this. It's number one in both the official and import charts. Spooky huh?	◎ 19
2	**Terminator** Everyone's bulging buddy struts his stuff in this gorgeous looking but ultimately shallow game	◎ 36
3	**Chuck Rock** The guy with the massive appendage (his chin *and* his beer gut) is flying high in the import charts	◎ 52
4	**Super Monaco GP2** Ayrton Senna brings his driving expertise to Sega's classic drive-'em-up and makes it even better	◎ 5
5	**Olympic Gold** Pummel your joypad and break your fingers with this Olympics simulator.	◎ 42
6	**Splatterhouse 2** Gory graphics and butch visuals make this a game that no violence-crazed axe murderer should miss	◎ -
7	**Krusty's Fun House** Krusty is the clown in the Simpsons. Here you have to clear his house of rats. Reviewed on page 40	◎ -
8	**Dungeons & Dragons** In Paul Mellerick's completely biased opinion (he hates RPGs) this game stinks. But you may disagree	◎ -
9	**Grand Slam** Soon to be re-released as *Jennifer Capriati's Tennis* in the US, this game is ace...	◎ -
10	**E Holyfield Boxing** What a man – but not such a great game. Don't let the graphics fool you, this lacks punch	◎ -

For MEGA's full Top 100 listing start at page 76

ELSPA PENGUIN CHARTS COMPILED BY GALLUP SPONSORED BY PENGUIN BISCUITS

WHIZZ KID Games

George Formby once sang, "I'm leaning on the lamppost at the corner of the street until a certain little cartridge comes by". He should've read Andy Dyer's previews to get a peek at *all* the new games. Funny old world innit?

JOHN MADDEN '93

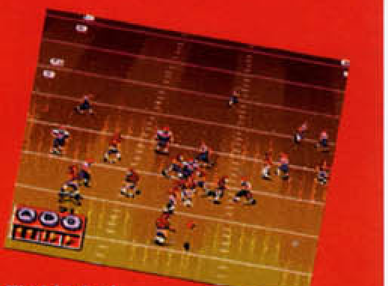
EASN • November

Oh blimey! Not another John Madden game. What could they possibly have done this time to make it different? Perhaps we'll be seeing *"Madden '93 – John Versus The Cosmic Warthogs"*, or perhaps an epic adventure in which Madders takes on the role of a wizard battling against the evil might of the demon Mon Tana. Then again... perhaps not. No, let's face it, for real American footy fans, anything other than another bout of armour-clad, cheerleading, ball-lobbing action would be somewhat disappointing. So let's just have a look at exactly what is different about *Madden '93* in relation to its predecessors.

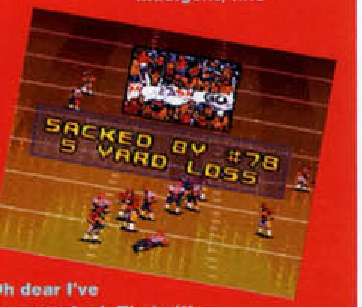
There are a few cosmetic changes such as some fairly amusing speech from the commentators and a bit of added animation, no, make that a lot of added animation – head butting, one-handed catches, catches off the shoes, stumbling, taunting, the list goes on... On the gameplay side though, there's been yet more "fiddling". The team stats have been changed to bring them more in line with current performances by the real teams, but more importantly a few more plays are available to you such as the "Quarterback Stop The Clock" play, which means, er, well, dunno. But apparently you can lob the ball on the floor, which is, supposedly, in some way beneficial, um... (Do you think they've realised you know bog-all about American football yet? – Ed.)

John Madden '93 will enable you to play what are regarded as the greatest teams of all time like the '77 Dallas team or Chicago '85, any one of eight legendary teams in fact. Whoop-de-doo. We've also been told that when the game finally comes, there's gonna be a heck of a lot more speech than there currently is in the John Madden '92, and it'll all be done by Madden himself. A sort of Sports Talk John Madden if you like.

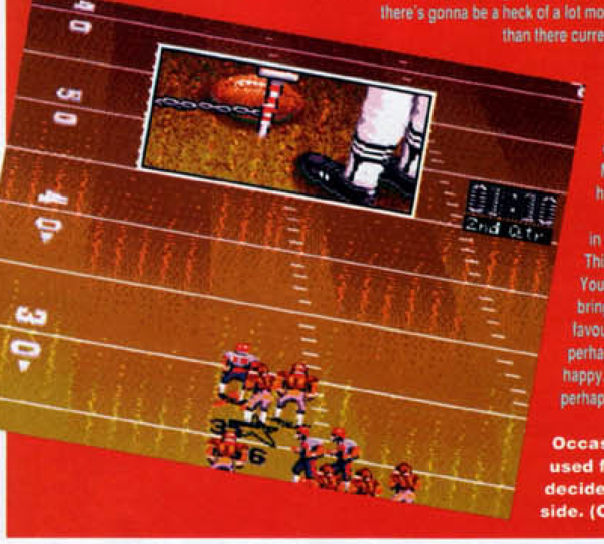
So, there are just a few of the changes which you can expect to see in November. Whether or not these are going to make "Madden '93 – This Time It's, Er, American Footy" a winner or not remains to be seen. Your best bet is to have a glance at issue two of MEGA because we'll be bringing you the full review of the finished game. *Madden* is Neil's favourite game of all time and Paul can't get enough of *Madden '92*, so perhaps Andy will be bowled over by *Madden '93* and then everyone will be happy. Then again, Andy doesn't know a defensive play from a marrow, so perhaps not.



That instant replay feature in action. You can rewind, play and fast forward the action if you feel a bit self-indulgent, like



Oh dear I've been sacked. That either means I've lost my job or someone's tackled the quarterback. But look at those fab new crowd scenes. Wooo!



Occasionally, American footballs can explode when used for extended periods of time. Here, the ref has decided to cordon off the area just to be on the safe side. (Oi Neil, do you think they swallowed it? – Andy)

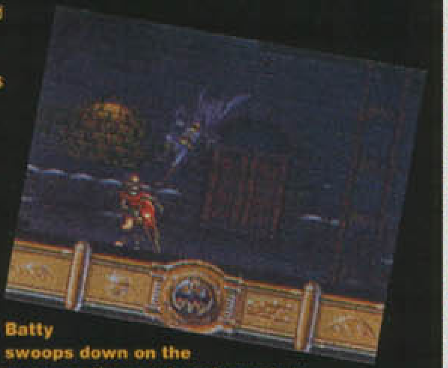
BATMAN RETURNS

Sega • November

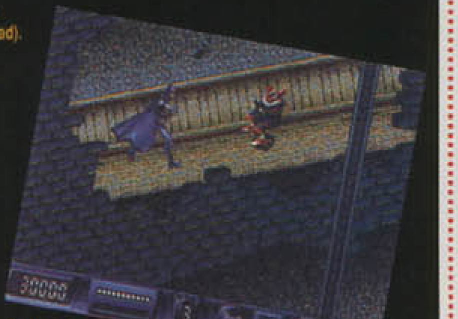
He's back, he's well-narked and he's got a bit of a groinal rash where that latex suit rubs against his Y-fronts. If you've seen Batman Returns (the movie that is), you'll already know the plot. If you haven't, tough, because it's far too involved to describe in such a small space. Needless to say, there's an awful lot of trogging around a platform-filled Gotham City, taking on the might of the Penguin (an ugly git called Oswald Cobblepot whose parents ditched him in the sewer 'cos he was such a hideous child and consequently has gone a bit mad) plus the odd encounter with Catwoman (dowdy ex-secretary who gets pushed out of a high window by her boss and consequently goes a bit mad). In fact, it's true to say that almost everyone in Batman Returns (other than Alfred the ever-so-reliable butler) has gone a bit mad due to some horrendous event occurring during their childhood.

How closely the game sticks to the plot of the film remains to be seen though. There are seven levels of Bat-tastic (Oh gawd – Ed) action and yes, the Batmobile's still in there somewhere, hopefully with the same bizarre modifications it had in the movie. For example, it's able to strip itself down to about a third of its width in order to get through small gaps.

We'll bring you more news of this Caped Crusader-mungous (oh, for crying out loud – Ed) cart when we get it.



Batty swoops down on the unsuspecting road worker only to discover that the council are employing stiffs to do their digging. This is a job for... someone else



Batman goes on a mission to Downing Street and bumps into John Major's dad as he's leaving Number 10. And for my next act? A Batarang to the unicycle

I am Batman, and I strike fear into the hearts of criminals by having my image emblazoned on mugs, T-shirts, pillowcases and even underpants... in fact all manner of tacky merchandise

SEPTEMBER

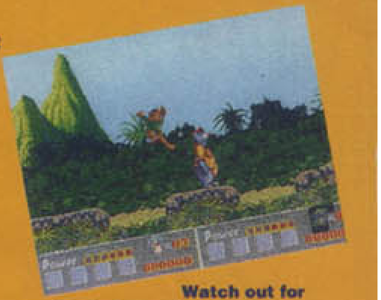
King Salmon – Sage's Creation
Mystical Fighter – DreamWorks
Romance Of The Three Kingdoms 2 – Koei
Side Pocket – Data East
Breach – Treco
Death Duel – Razorsoft
Gadget Twins – GameTek
Gemfire – Koei
Sorcerer's Kingdom – Treco
Black Hole Assault (CD) – Bignet
Captain America And The Avengers – Data East

TALESPIN

Sega USA • November

It seems that every other cart that comes out these days has something to do with Disney doesn't it? No? Oh please yourselves.

Anyway, *Talespin* is based on the afternoon cartoon series (shown in America) and features Baloo (of Jungle Book fame) and Kit (mmm, not sure about him) as they take part in an around-the-world air race. Now, seeing as we only have the merest snippets of information about the game it seems a bit odd that the screenshots don't appear to contain any forms of flying machine whatsoever. When we actually get to see the game we'll try to fathom out exactly what's supposed to be going on and than let you know. Still, it looks quite pretty, doesn't it?



Watch out for that strange "thing" Baloo

ARIEL, THE LITTLE MERMAID

Sega USA • November

I don't mind admitting it, I've seen the movie and loved every minute of it. Especially that bit where Murphy gets his arms blown off by those thugs at the beginning. Ah no, that was Robocop wasn't it? So what's all this mermaid cack then? Well, apparently it's all based on that soppy, sentimental Disney movie that came out a couple of years back.

Basically, there's a lot of swimming around to be done as you try to defeat Ursula, the evil sea witch, in an attempt to save Triton and the rest of the Mer-people from a fate worse than floundering on a beach, dorsals down, choking on all the fresh air.

It might all sound gut-churningly cute but let's face it, there's never been a mermaid simulator on the Mega Drive before, so it might just be different enough to make it a hoot.

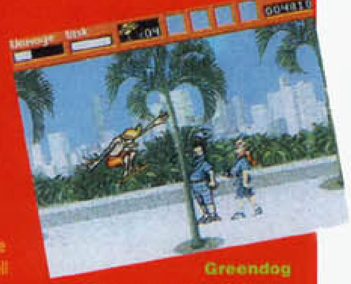
OCTOBER

F-19 Stealth Fighter – Microprose
James Bond-The Duel – Domark
Keeper Of The Gates (CD) – Razorsoft
Monopoly – Parker Brothers
Strider 2 – US Gold
Uncharted Waters – Koei
WWF Wrestlemania – Acclaim

GREENDOG

Sega • September

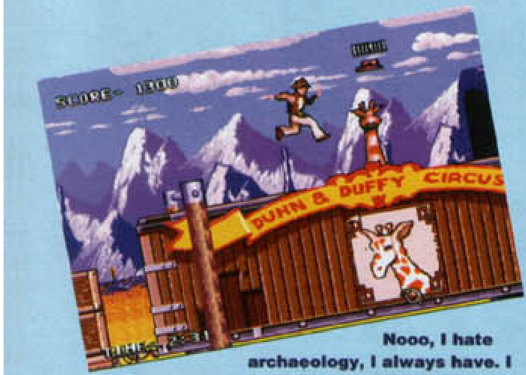
The Beached Surfer Dude. A surfer without a surf board is like a chicken full of sage and onion... stuffed! And so when Greendog wipes out on a truly massive wave and wakes up to find himself boardless and wearing a magical pendant he's understandably confused. And that's where you come in as you guide Greendog through a series of adventures featuring digitized backdrops and a host of cartoony opponents. What's more, the only weapon at the surf dude's disposal is a frisbee. *Greendog* should be well cool when it eventually arrives, so keep a close eye on future issues of MEGA to get hold of news first.



Greendog does some tourist-worrying in his spare time

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US Gold • November



Nooo, I hate archaeology, I always have. I want to join the circus NOW! (Oh dear!)

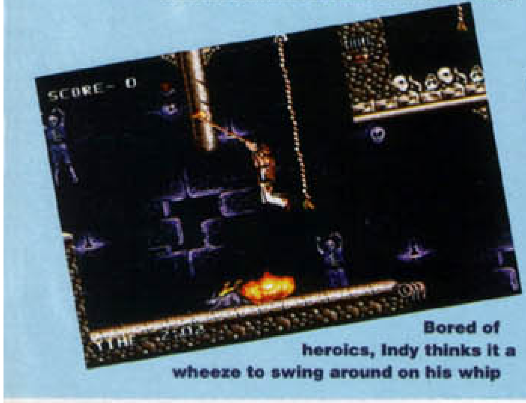
When somebody asked us if we'd like to go to see the famous Indiana Jones we thought, "Great, a trip to the States to meet none other than Harrison Ford himself". Sadly, the Indiana Jones in question was a game, and the exotic location was Didsbury in Manchester. What a bummer!

Off we toddled to Tiertex, the programming house that's coding the game for US Gold. The bloke who we had a chat to was Paul Gill. He's the programmer, and has worked on such projects as *Italia '90* (C64), *Indiana Jones* (C64), *Dynasty Wars* (C64) and *Strider 2* (Lynx). *Indiana Jones*, however, is his first Mega Drive title. He likes the sprite-shifting and hardware-scrolling capabilities of the Mega Drive and is glad to have moved on from the C64. The Indy project took between 8-14 months to complete, the first month of which Paul spent learning his way around the Mega Drive as well as learning a great deal about the programming side of things.

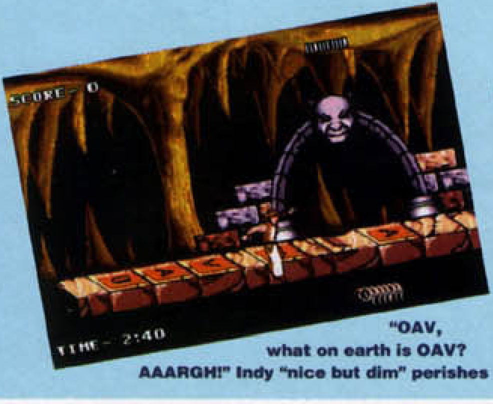
The team responsible for the visuals are Dave Price and Steve Bouie while John Hancock did the music. Oh yes, and some northern beer swilling bloke called Danny Curley play tested it.

It's basically a platform game in which you jump, crawl and wander around the play area while whipping or punching the various hazards and enemies. There are five levels each with a minor end-of-level guardian. At the moment, according to Danny Curley, the game is a little too hard, but Paul claimed it's not too hard, it's just that Danny is a no-hoper.

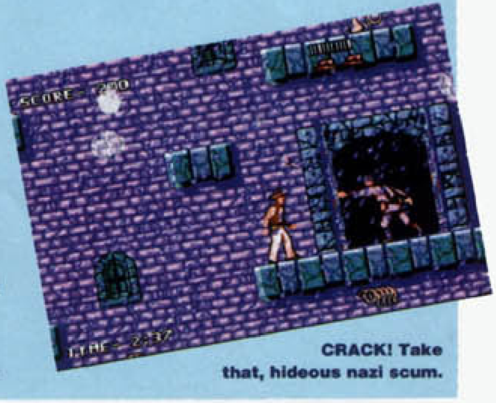
One of the nicer features of the game is that many of the challenges stick closely to the plot of the film so if you have a sound knowledge of that, you'll be able to figure out the game more easily. We asked if there's any love concept to the game and if Indy gets the girlie. We were told no, but he does get his father. Mmm... moving swiftly on.



Bored of heroics, Indy thinks it a wheeze to swing around on his whip



"OAV, what on earth is OAV? AAARGH!" Indy "nice but dim" perishes



CRACK! Take that, hideous nazi scum.

THE KREMLIN

If you haven't already done so, go and have a look at the review of *Dragon's Fury* on page blah. Impressed? Well, whether you are or not, we thought you might like to hear a bit more about the chaps and chapesses involved in this and many other up 'n' coming Mega Drive games. The company is Domark (yes, of course you've heard of them) and the not insignificant portion of the organisation that brings you these games is an in-house programming team called The Kremlin.

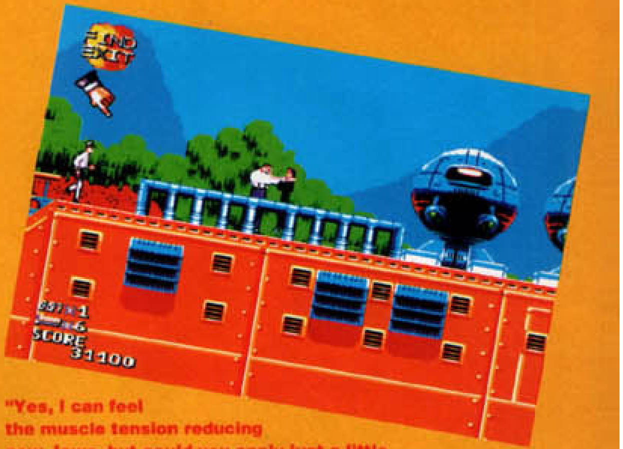
The company as a whole began in 1984. Things trundled along quite nicely thank you,until April 1990, when it was decided (for several reasons) to form an in-house centre of expertise. Initially there were four people involved. One of the reasons for the move was to cut down on costs, cutting out expensive freelancers. Also, when you're dealing with employees as opposed to outside programmers, you can keep closer tabs on progress, and hopefully meet deadlines more easily. And indeed, Domark works very closely with the Kremlin team in setting up feasible deadlines so that both sides are happy. Fab.

Okay, so having set the wheels in motion The Kremlin began to grow and grow, expanding to a team of 12 by April 1991 and now standing at 18 programmers. Of course these aren't the only changes that are taking place at Domark. While two years ago Domark's output was all on home computers, they now have their sights firmly fixed on the console and PC markets. They've all but dropped production of Amiga, ST, and 8Mbit home computer titles and are currently working on new projects for the PC, Mega Drive, Master System and Game Gear. No Nintendo games are being worked on at the moment but, well, chances are...

So what's winging it's way from the Kremlin to our Sega Mega Drives. Well, the next thing is *James Bond – The Duel*, but more on that later. After that we can expect a Mega Drive version of MIG-29 and... um, er. Sadly this little featurette will have to end right here because all the other future projects that the Kremlin are working on were much too secret and sensitive to be divulged to unscrupulous old hacks like us.

JAMES BOND THE DUEL

Domark • October



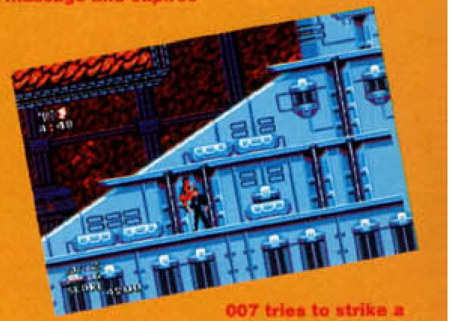
"Yes, I can feel the muscle tension reducing now Jaws, but could you apply just a little less pressure. Ahem, Jaws? Groink!" Bond mistakes a strangle hold for a massage and expires

Yes it's true! The Mega Drive version of *James Bond* is finally up and running at chez Domark. Unlike previous Domark James Bond games, this isn't based on any of the films, or rather, it borrows bits from many of them. They did this because the company that makes the movies are unsure whether they're going to make another one. Domark decided to go for it now rather than wait for something that might never happen (and besides it's a lot cheaper than getting a movie licence).

It's a sort of platform blaster with the odd (but fairly simple) puzzle element thrown in. The programmers have learnt from their experience with *Prince of Persia*, and the main Bond sprite moves beautifully, and to be honest so do the rest of the characters. Speaking of whom, all the old favourites are there like Jaws, Odd Job, Bones and Mayday. Each of the levels involves various typically Bond-like antics such as attaching bombs to things and sitting back to watch the firework display. And of course, Bond wouldn't be Bond if all this was taking place in a warehouse just south of Wrexham, oh no. The locations are also Bond through and through. Underground labs, tropical islands, huge ships... you know the sort of thing. And with any luck there should be a few succulent females scattered around for Bond to, er, synchronise watches with. It's enough to make Scaramanga's third nipple stand on end.

Bond on the Mega Drive is looking very pretty indeed, but this was just a quick snifter of what's in store. If you want to hear a bit more about the gameplay, you'll have to rendezvous with MEGA next month when we'll be previewing the pants off a finished version.

Next mission: to figure out what this is supposed to be



007 tries to strike a dashing pose... and succeeds

NOVEMBER

Lemmings – Sunsoft
American Gladiators – GameTek
Batman Returns – Sega
Chessmaster – Mindscape
Deadly Moves – Kaneco
Ex-Mutants – Sage's Creation
Hook – Sony Imagesoft
Indy Jones And The Last Crusade – US Gold
John Madden '93 – EASN
King's Quest 5 (CD) – Sierra On-Line
Metal Fang – JVC
Tail Spin – Sega
The Third World War (CD) – Bignet
Thunder Storm (CD) – Renovation
Trouble Shooter –Vic Tokai

PREVIEWS

DECEMBER

Dungeon Master: Skull Keep (CD) – JVC
Hit The Ice – Taito
Police Quest 3 (CD) – Sierra On-Line
Sonic 2 – Sega
Space Quest 4 (CD) – Sierra On-Line
Stellar 7 (CD) – Sierra On-Line
Strike Eagle 2 – Microprose
Superman – Sunsoft

JANUARY

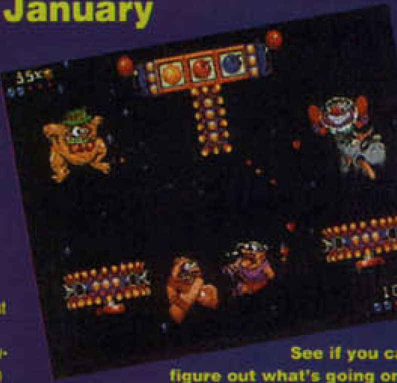
Ariel – Sega
B-Bomb – Sega USA
Mega Lo Mania – Virgin
Road Rash 2 – EA
Alien 3 – Flying Edge

B-BOMB

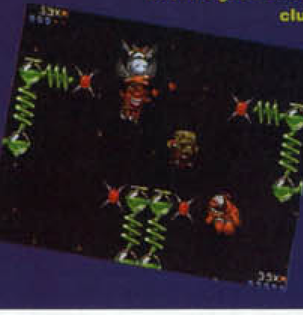
Sega USA • January

Apparently this game is a "bold, brash, b-hind bruiser". Quite what that means is beyond us here at the MEGA office. Did anyone tell the Americans that they're supposed to shove their B-bomb cart into the Mega Drive?

The rather vague press release we received about the game didn't really tell us much, but from what we can gather, it's all about a cow and a bulldog in a low-gravity environment who despatch their enemies by leaping high into the air and plunging down to bottom them into oblivion. As you can see, it all looks very cartoony and apparently there's even a guest appearance from Sonic. It looks very different indeed so we'll keep our eyes and ears open for more news on this one.



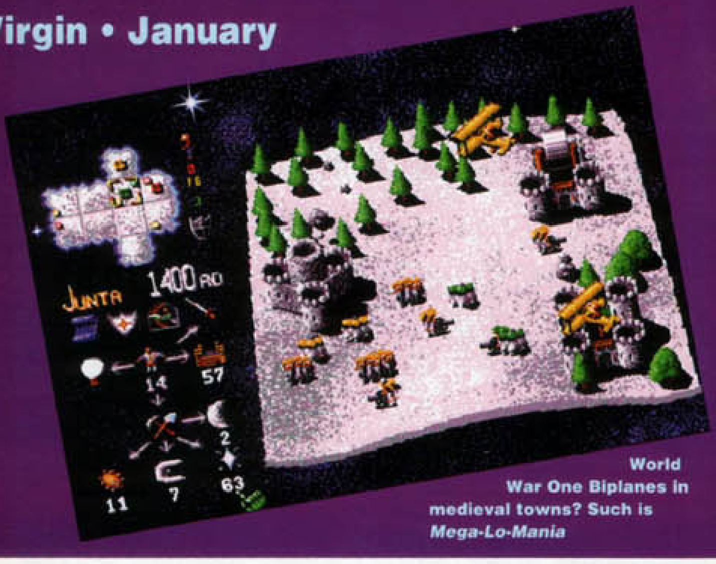
See if you can figure out what's going on in this game. Then, tell us 'cos we haven't got a bloody clue



As the old saying goes, if you want to get ahead, get a cow. Mmmm...

MEGA LO MANIA

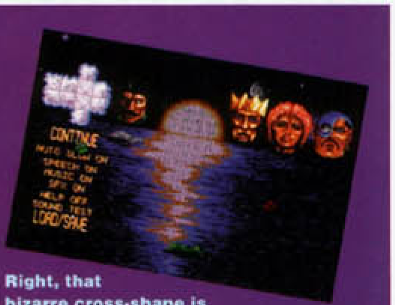
Virgin • January



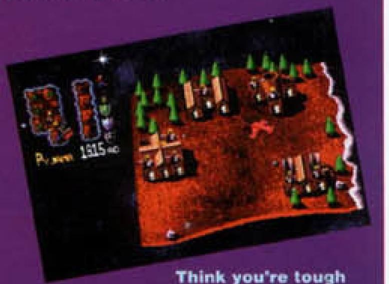
World War One Biplanes in medieval towns? Such is *Mega-Lo-Mania*

Looks a bit like *Populous* doesn't it? But this is a more light-hearted approach to the whole "playing God" thing altogether. It's all icon driven and to begin with it may seem a bit daunting, but it is, in fact, a very simple game to play indeed. The idea is to cultivate, and look after a small community, get them breeding, inventing, mining for materials with which to make the inventions and so on until they're strong enough, and wise enough to beat the living daylights out of the rest of the communities that live on the island they inhabit.

The thing that makes this a little different from the other "deity simulators" around is that it's funny, dead funny. Also the game plays pretty fast. While *Populous* enabled you only to influence events and await the outcome, *Mega Lo Mania* requires you to fiddle with your people (no sniggers please) to keep things moving at a suitably fast pace.



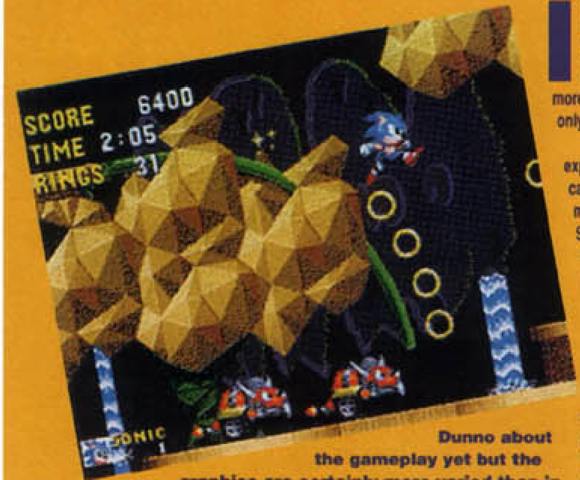
Right, that bizarre cross-shape is the island you have to conquer, that's you next to it, and those three ugly goons are the other megalomaniacs you have to defeat



Think you're tough do ya? Just because your living in the 14th century. Boy have I got news for you. My latest invention is the Global Thermonuclear Destructor, catchy name don't you think? One press of a certain little red button and you can kiss your behind goodbye. Roughly translated, this means death

SONIC 2

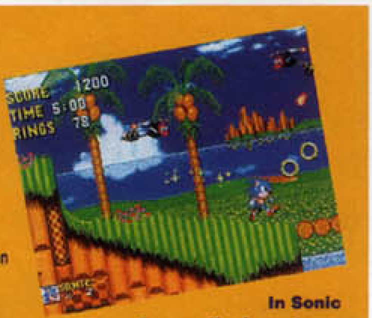
Sega • November



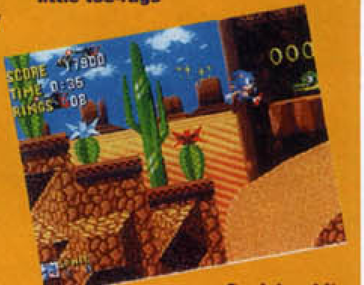
Dunno about the gameplay yet but the graphics are certainly more varied than in Sonic's first adventure. Doesn't this get you going?

If this isn't the most eagerly awaited sequel (or possibly game) ever, then your gonna have to tell me what is. Our old spikey blue buddy (that's Sonic, that is) is back for another epic adventure against the evil Dr Robotnik, but this time he's brought along a friend. *Sonic 2* is set over more than 35 levels (that's almost double the amount in the first game, which only had 18).

Sonic and Tails the fox (a fox who curiously, and for reasons never explained, has two tails) have the intriguing ability to move so fast that they can travel through time. Entering prehistoric and futuristic levels Sonic must get to the evil "Death Egg", Dr Robotnik's means of destroying Sonics home world, before he uses it. Apart from coming out on the Mega Drive it will also be released on the other two Sega formats as well as the Mega CD. With enhanced sound and cartoon quality slideshows, this will be the hottest release ever. The game will see Sonic, now a spritely 16 years old, running even faster than in the first game, and when he reaches top speed he'll be able to reach Warp-Sonic speed making time travel possible. As for Tails, well he's rumoured to be in his fifth year and he's Sonic's biggest admirer, mimicking everything Sonic does. Apparently this will mean that two players will be able to play the game simultaneously, one taking Sonic's role and one playing Tails. *Sonic 2* is due for a November 1992 release so stay tuned to Mega for the definitive review. And if you want to win one of the first copies into the country, there are 50 up for grabs on page 14.



In Sonic 2, even the hornets have been given a bit of a facelift. Look at the stripey little toe-rags



Sonic's a bit of a time-traveller in this sequel. God knows where he is here? Or *when* he is?

FEBRUARY

Flashback – US Gold
Strider 2 – US Gold
Super Kick Off – US Gold

THOSE WHAT WE AIN'T GOT DATES FOR

Bimini Run – Nuvision
Fatal Fury – Takara
King Of The Monsters – Takara
Leisure Suit Larry (CD) – Sierra On-Line
MIG-29 – Domark
Out Of This World (CD) – Virgin
Pirates – Microprose
Pit Fighter 2 (CD) – Tengen
Raiden Trad – Bignet
Super Battletank: War In The Gulf – Absolute
Terminator (CD) – Virgin Games
X-Men – Sega

NEXT MONTH

Well, more of the same really.
We'll be bringing you the latest on all the up 'n' coming Mega Drive releases accompanied by the most up-to-date screenshots anywhere. But that's a bit vague really isn't it? It's hard to know exactly which rip-roaring exclusives we'll be able to pick up, but you may well be seeing more of the following next month:
Road Rash 2
Flashback
And heaps more, hurrah!

Better still, we'll be bringing you full up-to-the-minute reviews on *John Madden '93* (Cor!), *Batman Returns* (Cor! Gosh!) and *Sonic 2* (Cor! Gosh! Wow! Blimey! Flip! Etc...)

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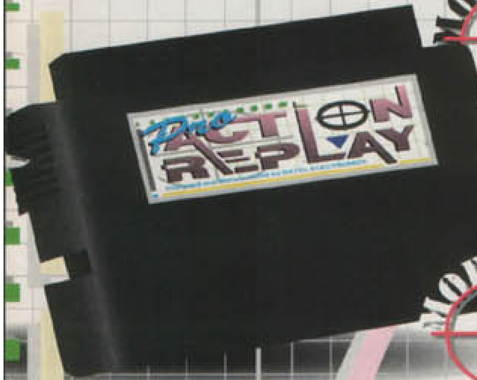

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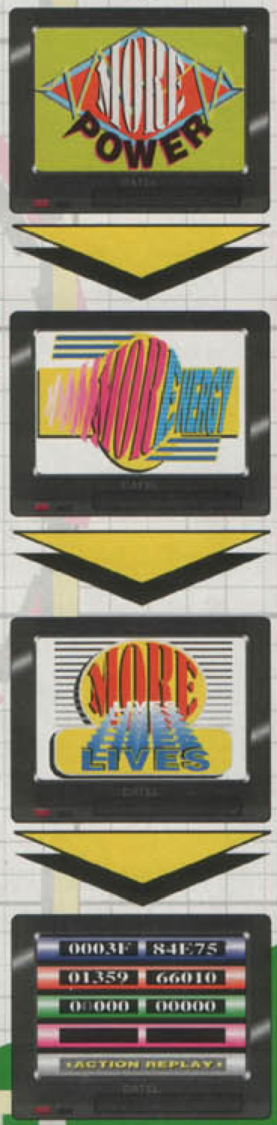

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REVIEWS

"OK Dyer, what the flange are you going to do with this page?"
"Errr..."
"I'm waiting."
"Right, an index, an explanation of the rating system and a bit that introduces the reviewers to the readers. How's that?"
"Mmmm... not bad. I'll have to sack you tomorrow instead."

OCTOBER '92

NHLPA Hockey	32
Krusty's Super Fun House	40
Prince Of Persia	42
LHX Attack Chopper	44
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Speedball 2	50
The Aquatic Games	52
Sports Talk Baseball	54
Team USA Basketball	56
Smash TV	57
Dodgeball	57
Dragon's Fury	60
Budget Round-up	60

RATINGS

It's the best, most accurate, easy-to-read rating system ever. If you don't believe us, take a look.

How many players can play the game at any one time?

Skill levels? Yes please. Here we tell you how many there are

How many lives are you given? And how many continues?

A game with this icon has a password system!

Even better, a game with this icon comes with battery back-up!

Sonic's got 18 but EA Hockey hasn't got any. Stages that is.

GRAPHICS **9**
●●●●●●●●●●

Five game components are rated individually out of ten. Here's what we look for in each:
GRAPHICS: Presentation, animation, scrolling, collision-detection, design and speed
SOUND: Music, FX, samples and speech
GAMEPLAY: Movement, control mechanism, difficulty, challenge, design and fun element
GAME SIZE: How much does the game offer?
ADDICTION: Will you be hooked from the start?

MEGA SAYS
What we honestly and truly think of the game, be it praise or a good kicking. Ha!

79
PERCENT

WHO'S WHO?

NEIL WEST

This bloke studied politics at university and also did some acting, so he's a bit of a tedious git when he gets drunk. But one thing's for sure, he knows his Mega Drive. That's why he now edits MEGA after a long, successful stint as Deputy Editor on Sega Power. What a guy! What a hero! What a nerd! (Cheers – Ed)

ANDY DYER

Nintendo-convert Dyer's been running around like a blue-arsed fly for two years now. After nearly going mad in an insurance company, he started work on Commodore Format, then moved onto TOTAL! Now he annoys the crap out of Neil as Deputy Editor on MEGA. Still, he probably won't last long.

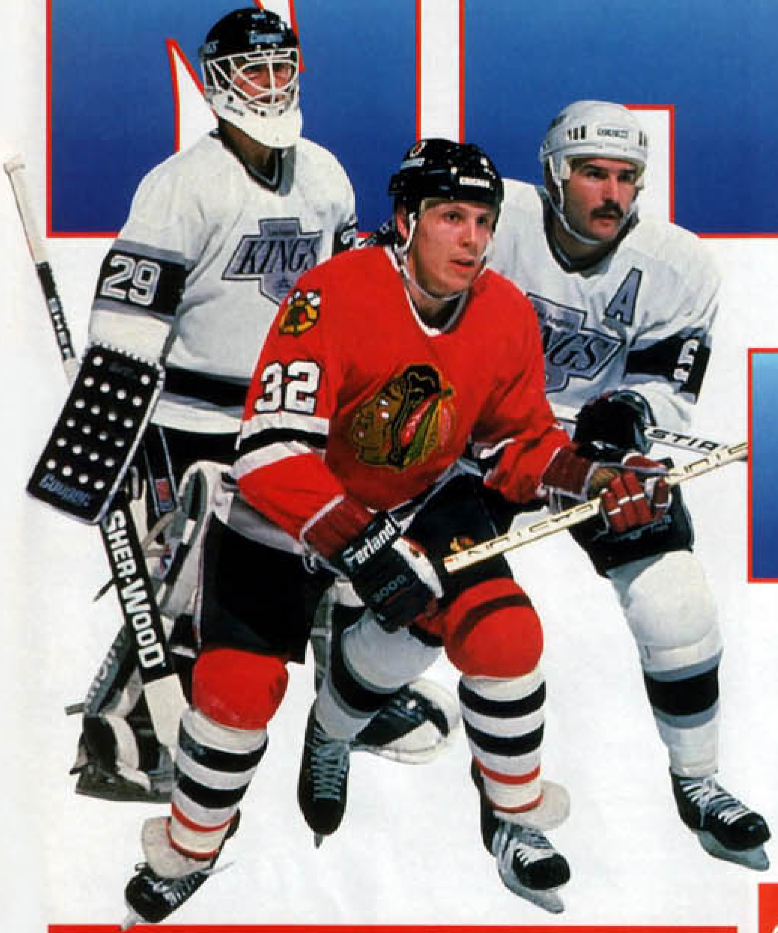
PAUL MELLERICK

No-one really knows where Paul came from. Officially, he used to work for Sega Force before being plucked away to work here. But we believe that he may well have sprung from the Devil's loins sometime back in the early sixteenth century. Ah well, anti-christ or not, at least he's a bit of a Sega expert.

AMANDA COOK

Amanda's design work on MEGA is so slap-dash that it only takes her about half an hour each month, so we get her working on reviews as well. Previously, she's wafted her crayons over Amiga Power and New Computer Express so she's been around a bit (according to the office gossip anyway).

NHLP HOC



EA Hockey – Electronic Arts Sports Network's classic ice-hockey sim – is it *really* the greatest video game of all time? A lot of people think so – Paul Mellerick to name just one. Me? I always found the game just a tad too random, without the depth of strategy or tactics demanded from a game such as *John Madden Football*. Don't get me wrong, I suckered for the adrenaline-pumping, end-to-end action as quickly as everyone else – for sheer excitement, tension and non-stop head-to-head action only *Speedball 2* comes close. It's just that everything that *EA Hockey* had to offer could be discovered within the first few matches.

EASN agreed that the game's one weak point was its lack of real depth, so *NHLPA Hockey* is their answer: the same heart-stopping action but this time built on top of a solid bed of seasons, player rosters, management decisions (sort of)

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES

So what has *NHLPA Hockey* got that *EA Hockey* hasn't? In the most in-depth review you're ever going to read, MEGA reveals *all* the new features.

There are 12 in all (a skater's dozen? – Ed) and not all of them are immediately obvious from the screenshots. So follow the red boxes for your complete guide to what's new on the rink.

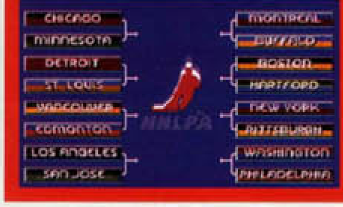
Each of the boxes contains either a ✓ or a ✗, depending on whether MEGA feel the new feature significantly improves the game or not.

① GENUINE NHL TEAMS ✗

CHANGE: Gone are the international contests of *EA Hockey*. *NHLPA Hockey* stars the pick of the bunch from the American NHL (National Hockey League). Teams such as Montreal, Ottawa or (the quite phenomenally crap) Hartford do battle re-enacting genuine NHL clashes.

Also included (just to soup things up a tad) are the ever popular All-Star teams from the east and the west – a couple of rootin' tootin', slap 'shootin', jock strapin' bunches of hardnuts ready and willing for a head-on match or a warm-up against one of the other, mortal teams. Choose the playoff option and the 24 league teams are whittled down to a more mathematically manageable 16.

SO?: Great for the Americans and the most fanatical BSkyB ice hockey followers. As much use as a luminous lettuce for anyone else.



CHICAGO
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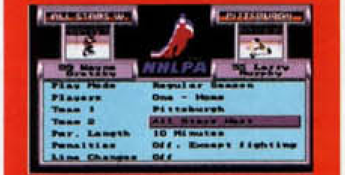
NEW YORK
PITTSBURGH
WASHINGTON
PHILADELPHIA

The playoffs: will you remember the name of *your* team?

② REAL PLAYERS ✗



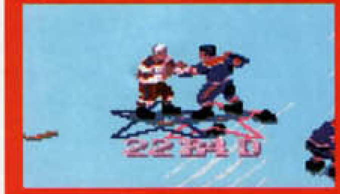
Play Mode Regular Season
Players One - Home
Team 1 Pittsburgh
Team 2 All Stars West
Per. Length 10 Minutes
Penalties Off, Except fighting
Line Changes Off

Wayne Gretzky – fine, we've all heard of him. But Larry Murphy? Isn't he in Dallas?

CHANGE: All of the 24 real teams in *NHLPA Hockey* are made up of real, alive and kicking, genuine players. Try breaking the ice with Mario Lemiuex, or beat off the groupies as the supremely popular Wayne Gretzky – there are over 500 players to know and love. The strengths and weaknesses of theses characters are calibrated to reflect genuine abilities, abilities which combine to shape the tone and strength of the overall team. During the action, the players are labelled with just their number and position. Their names are called during pre-match team comparisons and credited for scoring or assisting goals.

SO?: All the great players may be here, but the fact remains that you probably won't know them. Go on, try to name just three, other than Wayne Gretzky or Mario Lemiuex... See?

③ FIGHTING ✗

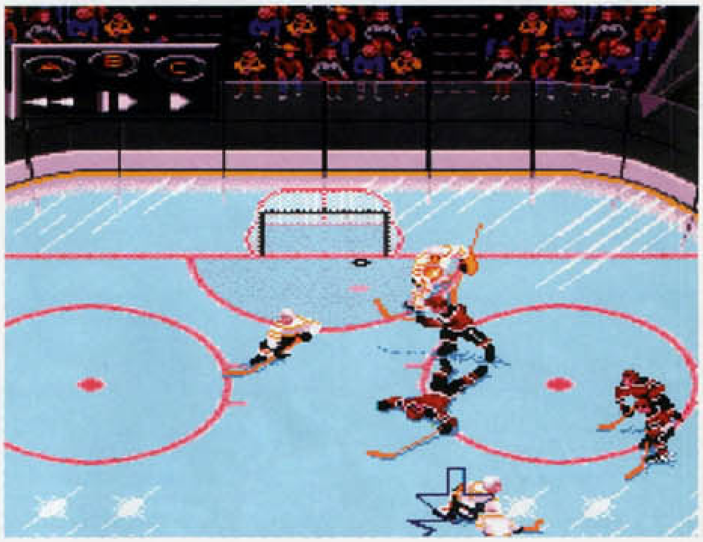


Fight! Fight! Fight! Fight! etc etc

CHANGE: The refs in *NHLPA Hockey* are a much sterner bunch than the cissies in *EA Hockey*. One little punch and both sluggers are sent to the sin bin to cool off for five minutes.

A KEY

Could *EA Hockey* be improved upon? Electronic Arts reckoned so. And after one year of tweaking, fine-tuning and expanding, they have produced *NHLPA Hockey*. Neil West is the UK's first reviewer to take to the ice...



You won't find goalmouth action any hotter than in *NHLPA Hockey*. The goalies dive out of their areas, players get knocked off their feet, sticks crack against limbs, and the puck moves like lightning

and personalities.

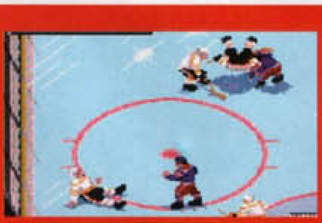
But have they actually managed to get the best of both worlds? The big question now is whether *NHLPA Hockey* is significantly better than the original classic, or whether the much fiddling was just change for change's sake, which has ultimately ruined a great game. For a complete guide to all the new features of the game and MEGA's opinion as to whether they improve the gameplay or not, read the red boxes which appear throughout this review. But for the moment, let's go back to basics and find out exactly what the game's all about. And where better to start than the original game itself...

The fastest full-contact sport in the world

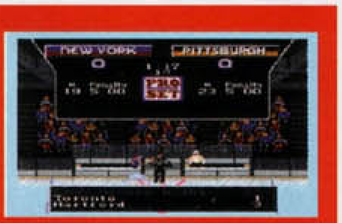
GET YOUR SKATES ON!

And take to the ice for the fastest full-contact sport in the world. Ice hockey is played by two teams of six men: each team has a goalie, a centre, two defenders and two wingers. Full-force slap shots travel at speeds of between 90 mph and120 mph and the game is so physically demanding that players typically join the game for three-minute periods and then are substituted while they take a rest.

No wonder, then, that ice hockey is internationally renowned as the hardest sport in the world. Fighting is an accepted element of every game, as MEGA found out from ➜



Violence erupts all over the rink

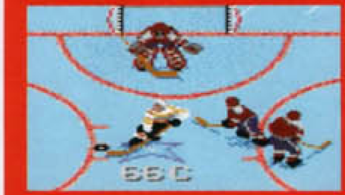


And the two sluggers get binned

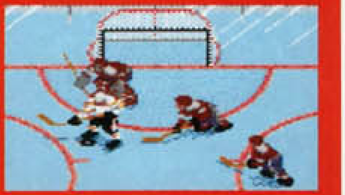
Also, it's now possible to slug, wallop and chin your opponent across the whole of the pitch and then back again – a bit like a tug of war in reverse. What's more, your mates join in and start their own scraps. Oh yes, you also end up with blood on the ice. Hooray!

SO?: Fighting (and starting fights) was great fun in *EA Hockey* and still is in *NHLPA Hockey*. Sending both players off for five minutes is a mistake though, as the sides remain balanced. Far more exciting to allow one team five minutes of power play. The blood's quite fun though.

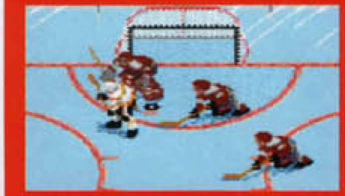
④ SIGNATURE MOVES ✗



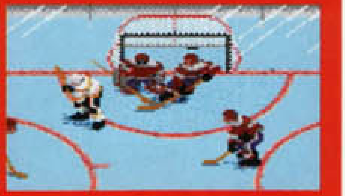
1. Here comes Mario Lemiuex...



2. Surely he can't shoot yet?



3. But yes! He shoots backwards!

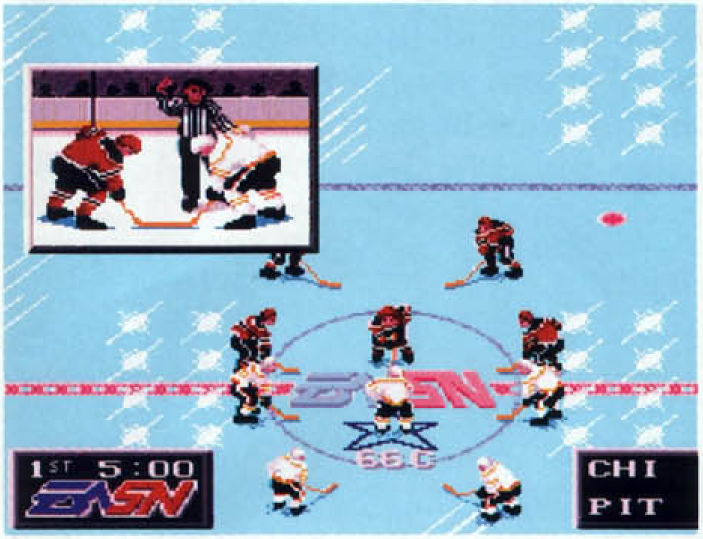


4. What a goal! What a man! (sigh)

CHANGE: Much as Mark Hughes plays football differently to Vinnie Jones, a selection of key characters in *NHLPA Hockey* supposedly have their own signature move, which you can learn to trigger off when in possession of the puck in the right place of the rink at the right time.

These are designed to add realism and atmosphere to the game as well as enhance the players' personalities within *NHLPA Hockey*.

SO?: In all the time we played *NHLPA Hockey* for this review, however, we only once spotted (even in demo mode) a signature move in full effect – this through-the-legs shot from Mario Lemiuex. This leads us to two possible conclusions:
a) the signature moves do exist, but they happen so infrequently that they might as well not exist;
and b) they happen every 30 seconds or so but are so unimpressive that nobody notices.
Whatever the explanation, it doesn't sound very good, does it?



Chicago take on Pittsburgh in the first round of the NHLPA tournament. At the face-off, your aim is to gain possession – so just keep hacking!

Steve Edwards, a referee belonging to the British Ice Hockey Association. Steve told us that rucks are often left to continue because they allow players to calm down and release some pressure.

"Ice Hockey is a full-contact, physical sport. It's inevitable that after a whole match of slamming, barging and tackling your opponents, someone will lose their rag. It's often better to let them sort it out quickly, than let it ruin the rest of the game," he explained.

It's partly because of the violent nature of ice hockey that it makes such a good televised sport. In the USA, it's right up there with basketball, football (American-style, of course) and baseball as the favourite sport of a whole nation.

And it's because *EA Hockey* recreated the feel of the real sport so well that it became one of the most popular Mega Drive games of all time. We think it's the MD's second best cart, with only *John Madden Football* (another sports game from the same stable) rated as a more essential purchase. (For the full Top 100 Mega Drive games, in full controversial order, start at page 76.)

> **The goalies are meaner than Arnie on laxatives**

Using a top-to-bottom, 3D perspective pitch to display the action, *EA Hockey* brought to the Mega Drive all the speed, all the violence, all the excitement and all the tension of the real thing.

All the realism was there: games took place over three periods, players could be substituted (by sending different "lines" of players on and off), all the rules of the sport were incorporated into the gameplay (don't worry you could – and still can – turn them off) and the teams available for play faithfully reproduced the genuine strengths, weaknesses and styles of real international squads.

All the real-life game-speed was there: an instinctive control method complemented smooth-as-silk skating animation to create a supremely realistic "feel". Swapping control from player to player was simplicity in itself and if your guys didn't perform, well, there's only one person to blame.

But EASN thought that this wasn't quite enough and saw fit to make a sequel. Why? Well there's two possible reasons...

ENTER THE SEQUEL

Now cynics will say that *NHLPA Hockey* has nothing to do with creating a "perfect game" but has everything to do with EASN wanting to flog the same old game, one year on, to a whole new batch of Mega Drive owners.

On the other hand, optimists will take the view that EASN genuinely wanted to make a great game even better and that they have genuinely done the whole thing over again for (Electronic?) art's sake.

MEGA don't really care; we just want to know if the game's any good or not. Actually, both points of view are true. Of course Electronic Arts are out to make money, they're a business.

Cont p.37 ⊖

REVEALED: THE MISSING RINK. HA!

(You're fired – Comedy Controller)

OK, so we've bolted a whole load of screenshots together to give you this – the complete picture with all the bits that are usually missing (hence the spectacularly low-quality heading to this section). This is where all the action happens, this is where it's at.

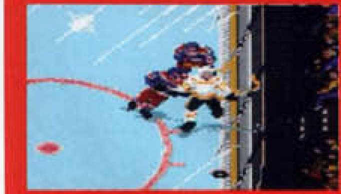
Quite big isn't it? And slippery. Cold too, I should imagine. Anyway, enough of such irrelevancies. Take a look at what goes on during just one game of *NHLPA Hockey*...

The team benches. If you make a change in lines, then some guys skate on, some guys skate off. It's all very obvious really...

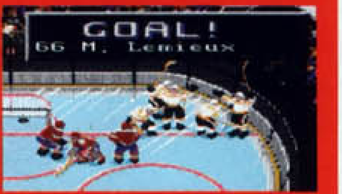
The centre circle. This is where the face-off at the start of each and every match "happens"

A goal! Complete with roving goalkeeper. If things are looking grim towards the end of a match, then it's possible to take off your goalie and replace him with an extra attacker. Downright dangerous, but sometimes a coach has gotta do what a coach has gotta do...

⑤ IMPROVED ANIMATION ✓



Look at him wobble! Charging into opponents has never been so much fun!



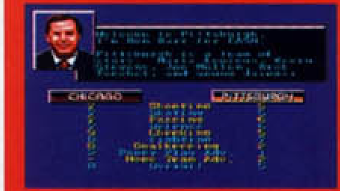
After a goal is scored, the celebrations are even more euphoric than in *EA Hockey*

CHANGE: Fouling your opponents never looked (or felt) so good. Thanks to those blood-thirsty guys at EASN in the US of A, you can now revel in even more detailed animation of a successful shunt, trip or slam. Shove your stick between their skates and watch them fall head over heels and land squarely on their backs. If they don't fall over, watch them wobble down the ice trying to keep their balance. Classic stuff.

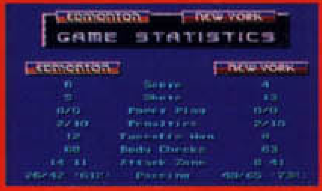
Other snippets of improved animation include the movement of the players themselves, super slap shots (smash those glass walls!), the signature moves (if you can find them) and the celebrations after a score.

SO?: Nice. All the new moves are smooth and add to both the entertainment and realism of playing. *EA Hockey* fans will think that there's no need for any more, but get used to *NHLPA* and you won't want to go back. All this without losing any game speed, very smart indeed.

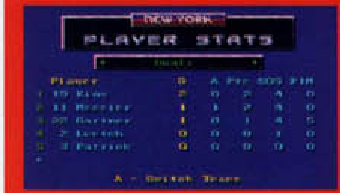
⑥ STATISTICS. LOADS OF THEM ✓



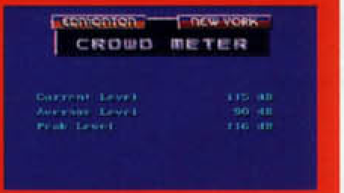
Go on Ron, compare the teams...



...and the game stats at the end...



***...and* give us the player stats...**

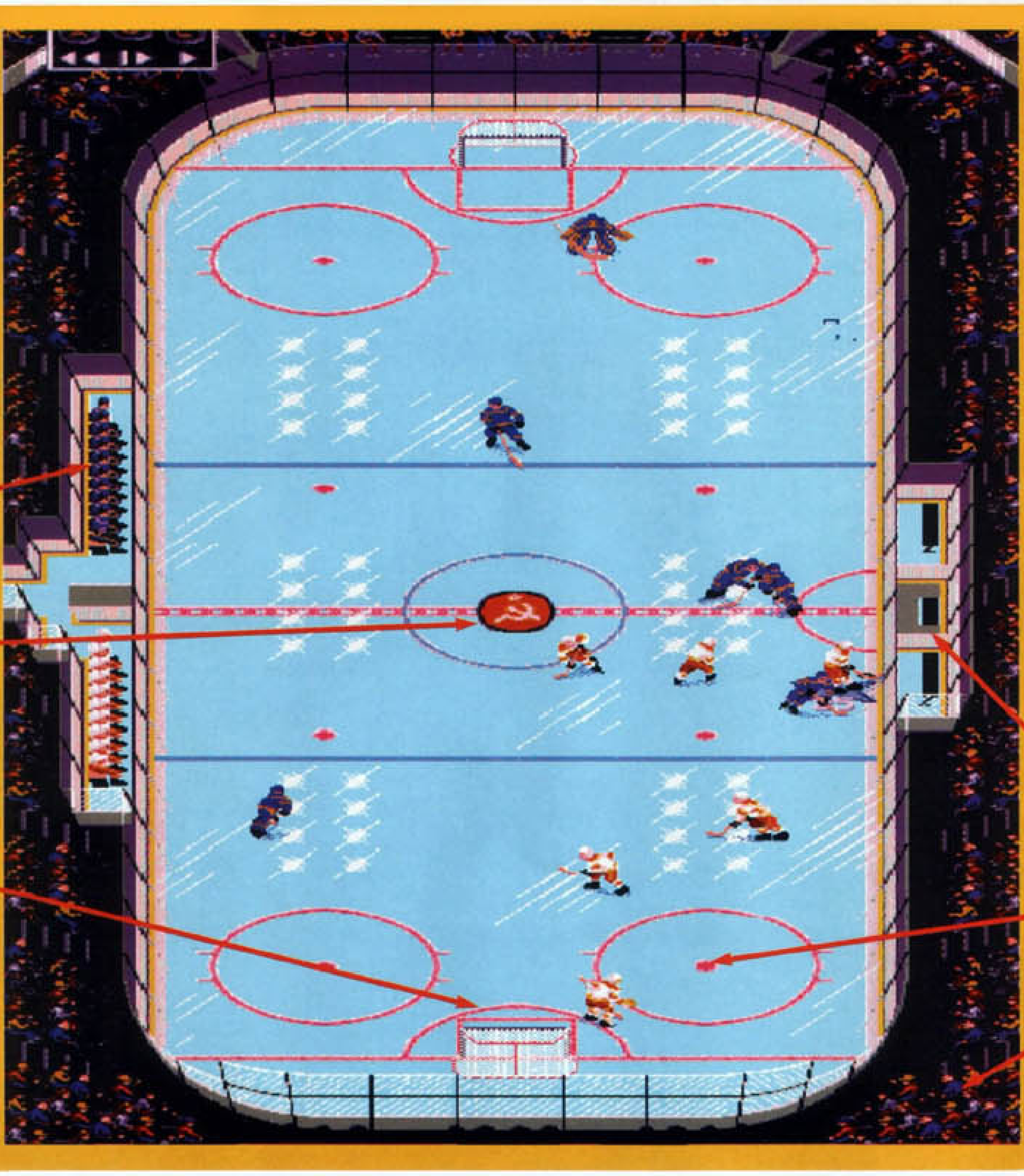


***...and* the crowd meter. Why not?**

CHANGE: Each category in the pre-game analysis of each team's strengths is now rated out of ten, so before each match you're given the no-nonsense low-down on your squad's shooting, passing, skating (are they serious? Hopefully they can all do that by now), fighting, checking, defense, goalkeeping and an overall mark. And that's just for starters.

There's also (deep breath) constantly updated individual player performance statistics (keep tabs on a player's performance throughout a whole season), player stats (based on 1992 league appearances), "man of the match" awards after each match complete with (wait for it) game stats, post-match scoring and penalty summaries, crowd clap-o-meters (hey! The volume of the crowd effects the morale of the home team), on-ice goal and assist confirmations including hat-trick announcements. Wow.

SO?: More vital statistics than at a beauty contest – and if you're into the sport, they're just as attractive. More relevant to the US audience than us Brits, but they're still a useful extra.



GET A GRIP!

D-pad – Guides your controlled player around the rink

Ⓐ (in defense) trips opponent
(while fighting) holds your opponent

Ⓑ (in possession) passes puck
(in defense) swaps control to player nearest the puck
(while fighting) throws a body punch

Ⓒ (in possession) tap to take a normal shot at goal
(in possession) hold to take a slap shot at goal
(in defense) extra burst of speed
(while fighting) throws a head punch

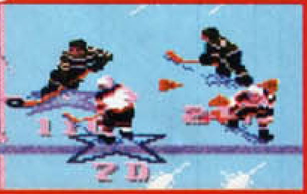
Ⓢ Pauses game to access game options, stats and action replay mode

A penalty box. This is where players are sent to cool off after fights. Penalty lengths vary, but during a heavy match it's unlikely that these seats will stay empty for long. Just try not to get caught!

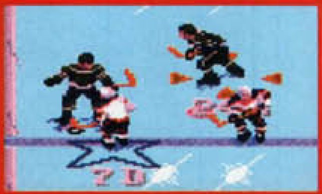
A face-off ring. There are five rings dotted around the rink. After a penalty or if the referee calls for a face-off, this is where it happens

The crowd. A rowdier bunch of yobs you'll be lucky to meet. The louder they cheer, the greater the home team's advantage

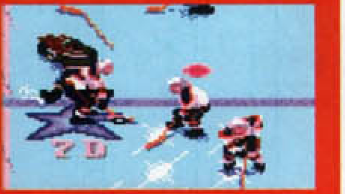
⑦ PLAYER INJURIES ✓



Viewers with queasy stomachs should look away pretty sharpish



No. 11 takes a pile-driver body-check and is cold before he hits



The blood pours out on to the ice and he's outta the game...

CHANGE: If a player gets hit too hard too often during play, or fails to cut the mustard in a fight, then he's out of the match for a period or the remainder of the game. A substitute replaces your injured (wimpy girlie) player, but he probably won't be as good as the man he's replacing so the overall standard of your team suffers.

SO?: Great stuff. It adds a whole new tactical element to team selection, as the unethical among us can start the match with a team of hard-nuts, take out all the opponent's star players, then bring on our real team. It's not, of course, quite as straightforward as that because, if you get caught "having a go", it's straight into the sin bin. Also, there's always the danger that while your frontline consists of hulking great Neanderthals, you're open to some seriously one-sided counter attacks. But you see the potential?

⑧ TUMPIN' ORGAN MUSIC ✗

CHANGE: Richard Clayderman met with the Hunchback of Notre Dame to compose a ghastly, clanking organ recital from hell, called When Uncle Kebabbed The Cat, to "fill in the gaps" between the action. Why did EASN do it?

SO?: Well, it's just like the real thing. Believe me. Anyone who's been to a real ice hockey match will tell you (except words haven't yet been invented to describe the abject nastiness of the nerve-jangling din).

Rob Hubbard really could have done a lot better than this, but if this Extreme Noise Terror on ice is what turns the Yanks on, then who are we to complain.

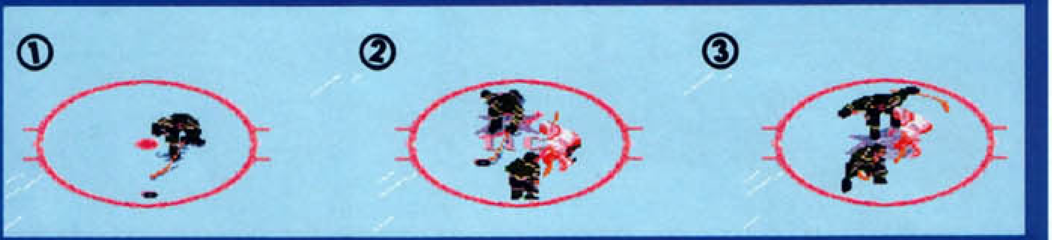
So Rob, we'll give you ten out of ten for accuracy, minus several million for ear-friendliness.

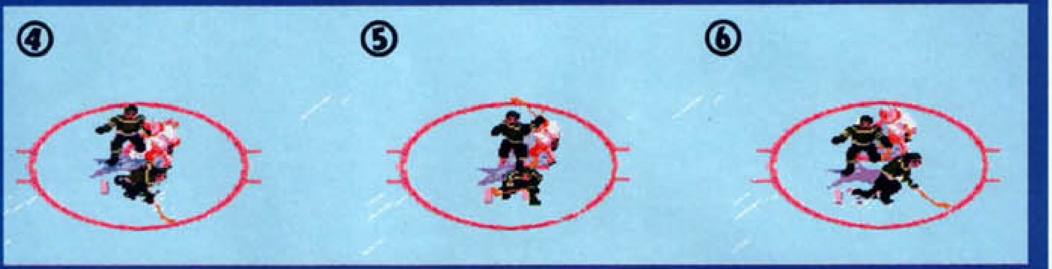
SLIP SLIDING AWAY

Just look at them fall over. You'd have thought that learning to skate would be a priority for any budding hockey star, but no – apparently not. Just look at these guys go! Come on, let's push 'em all over...

WIBBLY MOVE NUMBER 45...

And on the right, ladies and gentlemen, we can see Norbert Featherbottom performing the "Wooooaaaaahhhhhhh That Was *CLOSE!*" move as perfected by novice skaters the world over. An "assist" has to be awarded to the two members of the opposition who so kindly provided Norbert with a timely nudge, but after that the man was on his own. Respect due, then, to Norbert Featherbottom.
(Cue: polite applause)



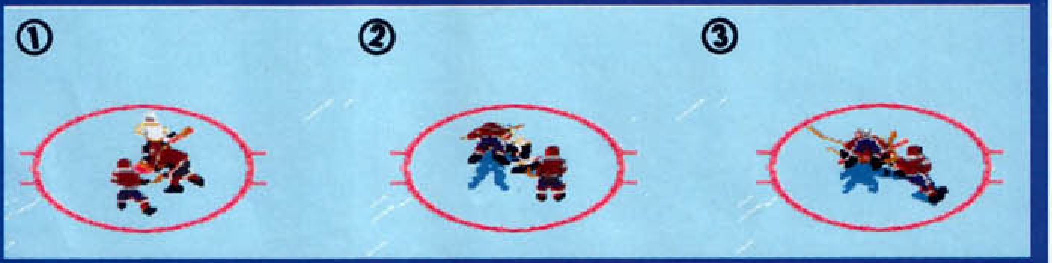


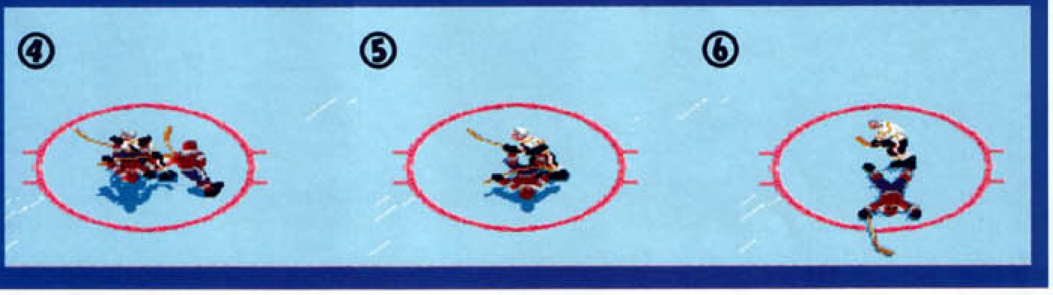
DANGEROUS STUNT NUMBER 135...

Now the full somersault should only be attempted by the real expert, as it involves a considerable amount of violence.

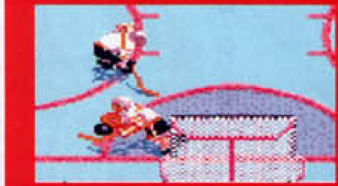
To complete the full 360° you need the help of either a smack in the face, or a hockey stick to the back of the head. But the rewards are considerable, as Harry Heineken demonstrates here.

Congratulations Harry, but don't try this at home, kids.
(Cue: an ambulance)





⑨ TOUGHER OPPONENTS ✓



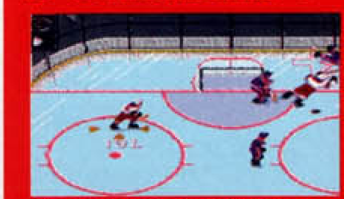
These goalies are *butch* – just look at this one leap from his line. Scoring is a whole lot tougher, as are the computer opponents – they're *real* mean

CHANGE: Check out the goalies: they're tougher, faster and more intelligent than ever before. They dive for pucks, lunge for high-corner slap shots and even make reflex-testing kick saves. Getting anything past them is now a lot, lot harder than it ever was in *EA Hockey*.

The rest of the players in all of the teams have benefited from an EASN steroid jab. They're tougher, they're harder-hitting, and they react a lot, lot quicker to offensive strategies. Don't underestimate this. The computer teams are now a hell of a lot tougher. OK, so some teams are better than others, but the overall standard has upped dramatically.

SO?: There's a whole new challenge open to *EA Hockey* masters. Don't expect to wade into *NHLPA Hockey* and start kicking ass – you won't.

①⓪ ACTION REPLAY HIGHLIGHTS ✓

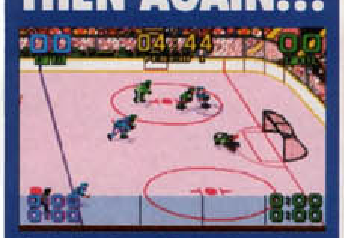


One more time, luvvies? Focus the action replay camera on any of your players and watch as they end up laughing or sobbing

CHANGE: Replaying action sequences is still part and parcel of the game, but now you can decide which player you want to concentrate the camera's attention on. View the move from the position of a defenseman, or take the goalie's view and watch your men skate away from you towards glory.

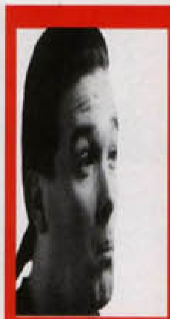
SO?: Obviously, most of the time you'll just want to concentrate on whoever's got the puck. But now you've got the chance to observe your opponent's defense preparing to repel borders. You can gaze away from your action and see your opponent's goalie come off his line – there's all sorts of potential to get to know *NHLPA Hockey* a whole lot better just by watching the action from different perspectives.

THEN AGAIN...



Mario Lemiuex Hockey from Sega – a pale imitation

Sega themselves had a bash at ice hockey in 1991 with a licensed game starring Mario Lemiuex. Using a more TV-traditional view of the pitch, the action was controlled from the side. But the system didn't really work as the action became confused. *Joe Montana Football* suffered the same, and both Sega games were eclipsed by their EASN rivals.



NOT SO FAST...

So, it's finally arrived then – the sequel to my favourite Mega Drive game. Trouble is, they've ruined it. I hate to be so blunt, but the little tweaks here and there have changed the game completely and made things too tough.

The great thing about the original was that is grabbed you where it hurts and dragged you in. It was fast, fun and easy to play but incredibly hard to master. In other words, *EA Hockey* was accessible to players of all abilities.

NHLPA Hockey is completely different. It takes ages to get into (though the basic gameplay remains the same) and scoring is now ridiculously hard as the computer-controlled goalkeepers are almost impossible to beat.

OK, so the two-player mode is as exciting as ever but when you get down to basics the overall game doesn't give you a great deal more than the original did – a sequel should always offer some decent improvement, in my book.

Stats, real teams, more stats, real players, yet more stats, All-Star teams and even more stats: they may add an extra element of realism in the US but here in Blighty they fall flat on their face. I would have much preferred to see a proper season included. But this wasn't to be.

If you're looking for an exciting, easy to play, two-player ice hockey sim, then buy *EA Hockey* because overall, *NHLPA Hockey* offers less.

Ⓜ *Paul Mellerick*

But the best way for them to make money is to make a game which will sell, and that means making the best games possible, so...

ONE YEAR ON

NHLPA Hockey arrives on the scene. Open box. Take out cart. Slap it in Mega Drive. Power-up. Let's go...

Forget the front-end – no-one really bothers watching the visual gymnastics of the title screens anyway. Let's get straight into the action. On first impression, the game feels the same, looks the same and plays the same. From the outset, it's obvious that the graphics haven't really been changed spectacularly, but then maybe that's no bad thing. Personally, I much prefer the blocky, chunkier character graphics of *John Madden Football* to the slicker, less-defined animations of *John Madden '92* – no such complaints here. OK, so there are a few extra frames of animation chucked in, but after a while you don't notice the change – they tend to crop up in between the "real" action or away from the puck. It's only when you go back to playing *EA Hockey* having got used to *NHLPA Hockey* that you realise just what a good job the programmers at Park Place Productions (the team responsible for most of EASN's games) have done.

The second thing to strike you (or more accurately, your goalie) is the fact that the game's tougher. These new players are as hard as nail pie and meaner than Arnie on laxatives. Within seconds of gaining possession, your computer opponents will be comin' at ya, all guns blazing. The game-intelligence of all the computer opponents has been upped a couple of notches, and that includes the goalkeepers – you just try to casually fool a shot past them, as you may have done in *EA Hockey*. A stick, arm or leg intercepts the speeding puck and bats it down with worrying consistency.

But then (bar the post-game stat analysis and match breakdown) that's it. The game's basically the same as it ever was, with just a little bit more of everything. The only other obvious improvements shine through in between matches when data is stored on the battery-backed memory – during standard play you'd think that the game had never been away.

SO WAS IT WORTH IT?

Yes. When all is said and done, *NHLPA Hockey* is a better game than *EA Hockey*. There's nothing ice-breaking or of drastic improvement on the original, but a little bit of tweaking can go a long way. The battery-backed memory can only be a good thing – though why a proper league option hasn't been included, I've got no idea. It should have been top priority.

Forget the real player and real team features (unless you're a genuine follower of a genuine squad) and forget the signature moves. Relish in the stats and game analysis if that's the sort of thing that lights up your Christmas tree, and get stuck in to the tougher challenge.

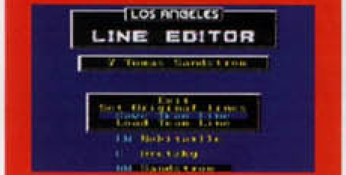
OK, so if you're new to the Mega Drive scene, or just never bothered buying *EA Hockey* a year ago, then this has got to be a highly recommended purchase. Just go away, buy it and enjoy... Go on then.

For those of you who are still here, well – you'll be wanting to know if it's worth buying *NHLPA Hockey* even though you already have the original. The answer is yes, but with a couple of conditions. Buy it if: a) you *loved* the original (basically, the gameplay is the same); b) you can sell your old *EA Hockey* cart (and on page 85 you can find out how easily this can be done); and, c) you reckon you're up to the challenge – this game is tough.

If (after all that) you intend buying yourself a copy – then you're joining a big club: this is one game that's destined to sell by the bucket (or should that be puck-et? Maybe not...) load.

Ⓜ ***Neil West***

①① BATTERY-BACKED CART ✓



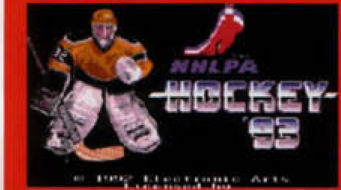
Custom line-ups are retained

CHANGE: OK, so *EA Hockey* had a password system, but *NHLPA Hockey* goes one better and comes battery-backed. This saves you the hassle of having to copy down passwords and also allows a much greater amount of information to be stored in between games.

So now, as well as your playoff positions, you can even save personalised team line-ups.

SO?: A lot more user-friendly, although it does mean less tip-fodder for Paul. Seriously, there's now no way you'll ever win the league unless you're actually good enough – no more borrowing of other people's passwords. But the added depth of stat retention has got to be a good thing.

①② BEGINNINGS AND ENDS... ✓

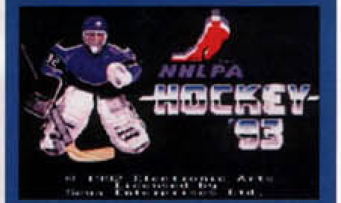


Doesn't he look *gerrr-reat!* Come on, you may be the size of a rugby prop-forward but you move just like Jane Torville so I'm not scared of you. Smile, go on!

CHANGE: Bit superficial really, but worth a mention. *NHLPA Hockey* is hosted by Ron Barr, USA's version of Jimmy Hill – presumably for quite a sizeable fee. His mouth bobs up and down roughly in sync with the typed team analysis and introduction to each game.

Also, if you do manage to win the play-off championships, you can watch your players celebrate on the ice, heroically carrying the trophy with them.

SO?: OK, beauty may only be skin deep, but who wants a woman with no skin? Or, er... juicy front ends for that matter. Actually, they're OK. Erm, let's give up this beauty analogy and just say that pretty intros (although completely useless) are OK by MEGA.



PUBLISHER: EASN
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE: October '92
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: EASN: 0753 549 442

One or two players can play head-to-head or as team mates

SKILL! Only one, but the games gets progressively harder

Lives. Er... no

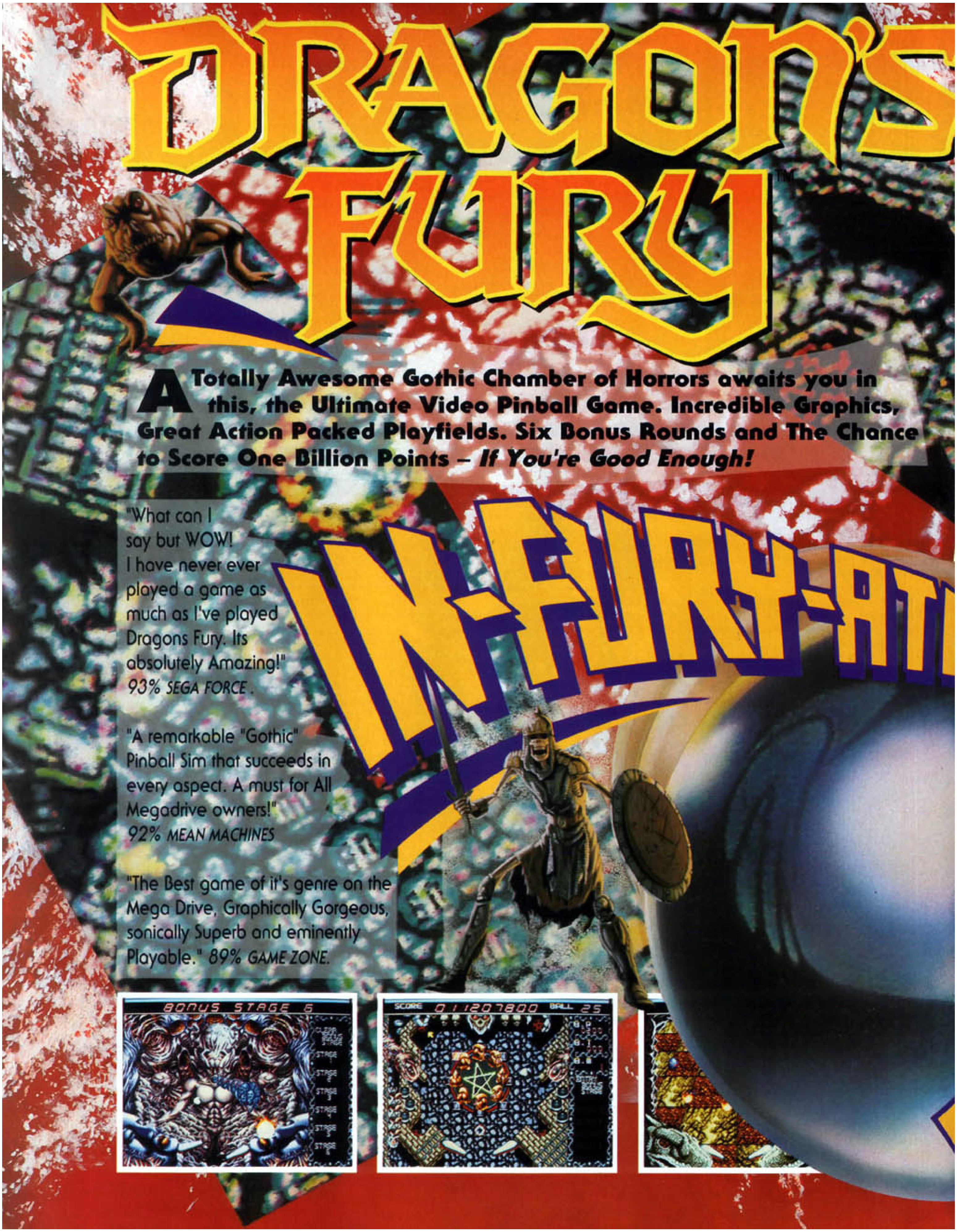
NO! A lovely battery back-up saves knockout positions and stats

There are two cups to win and 625 possible team match-ups

GRAPHICS ●●●●●●●●●○	9
SOUND ●●●●●●●●○○	8
GAMEPLAY ●●●●●●●●●○	9
GAME SIZE ●●●●●●●●○○	8
ADDICTION ●●●●●●●●○○	8

Bigger, better and bloodier than its older brother, *NHLPA Hockey* truly kicks. Sell your old cart and buy it

92 PERCENT



A Totally Awesome Gothic Chamber of Horrors awaits you in this, the Ultimate Video Pinball Game. Incredible Graphics, Great Action Packed Playfields. Six Bonus Rounds and The Chance to Score One Billion Points – *If You're Good Enough!*

"What can I say but WOW! I have never ever played a game as much as I've played Dragons Fury. Its absolutely Amazing!" *93% SEGA FORCE.*

"A remarkable "Gothic" Pinball Sim that succeeds in every aspect. A must for All Megadrive owners!" *92% MEAN MACHINES*

"The Best game of it's genre on the Mega Drive, Graphically Gorgeous, sonically Superb and eminently Playable." *89% GAME ZONE.*

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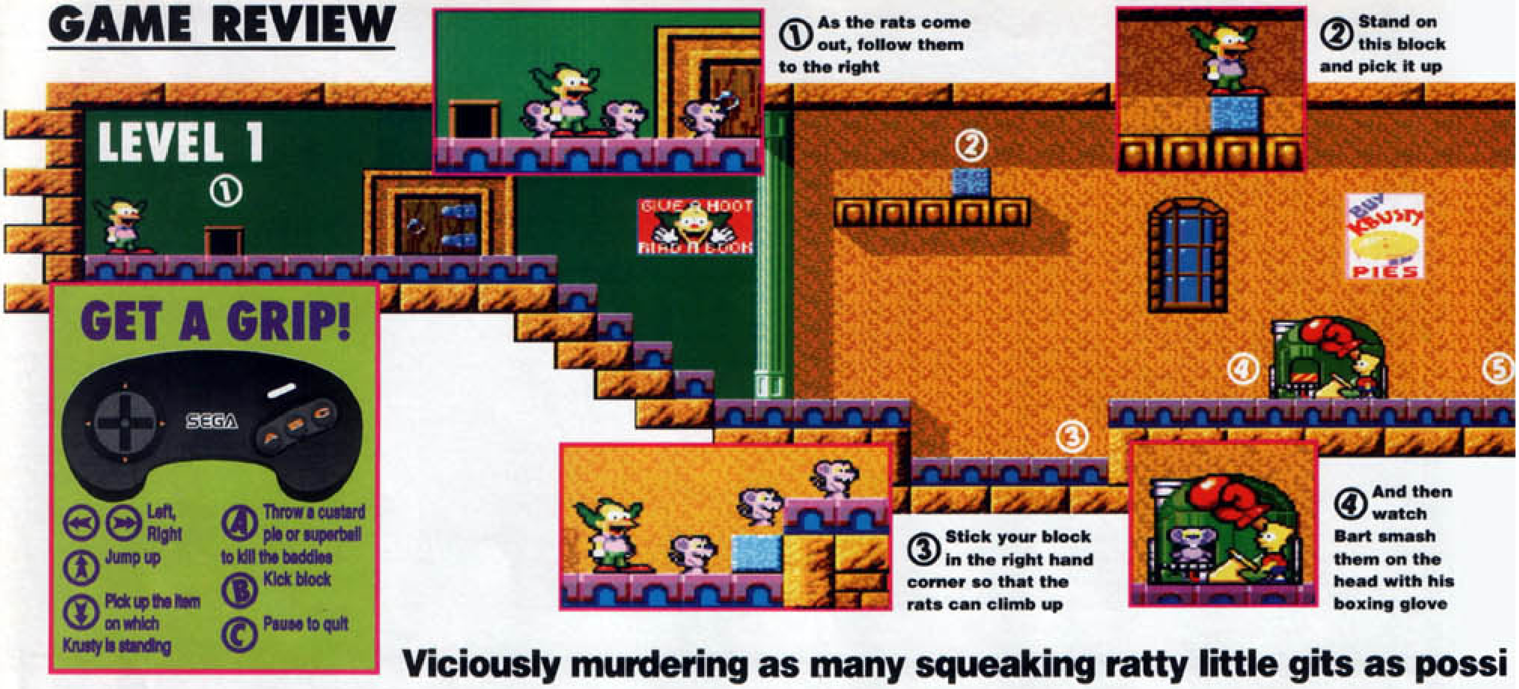


① As the rats come out, follow them to the right

② Stand on this block and pick it up

③ Stick your block in the right hand corner so that the rats can climb up

④ And then watch Bart smash them on the head with his boxing glove

GET A GRIP!

Left, Right
Jump up
Pick up the item on which Krusty is standing
Ⓐ Throw a custard pie or superball to kill the baddies
Ⓑ Kick block
Ⓒ Pause to quit

Viciously murdering as many squeaking ratty little gits as possi

KRUSTY'S

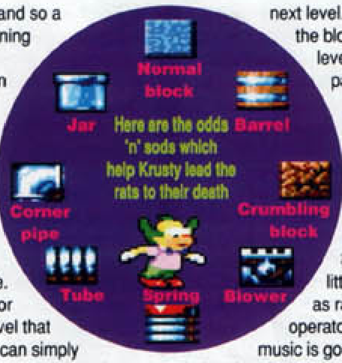
Krusty's Super Fun House* has a very cartoony look to it. And so it should have, as Krusty is one of The Simpsons clan and in this game he has the help of Bart and Homer to de-verminate his house of fun.

What we have here is a reversed scenario of *Lemmings*. Instead of trying to help the rodents to safety, however, you have to be totally ruthless and mash their cute twitching snouts into oblivion.

The first level is moderately simple and eases you into the gore gently. Very basically, *Krusty's* is a puzzle game which involves assembling bits of pipe and blocks through which to guide the *Lemming*-esque rodents to their inevitable doom.

A reversed scenario of Lemmings

Each of the five levels takes the form of a corridor lined with doors, which give access to some 6 to 14 rooms. From the corridor it is possible to choose whichever room you wish to enter (having the choice of what to do is somewhat more appealing than playing a game sequentially). Each level (or corridor) spans a vast number of screens which unfold in all directions, and so a great deal of frantic running around will be needed before you can move on to the next room (progress through which could be easy or more often than not mind-numbingly impossible). But, with a bit (or in some cases loads) of practice, you'll get there. And if you choose a door which takes you to a level that you can't manage, you can simply move onto another one, returning to the previous level later. After you've completed all the rooms in a level, you have to find a block with which to open the door to the next level. When you've found the block, access to the next level is granted and the pace is stepped up.



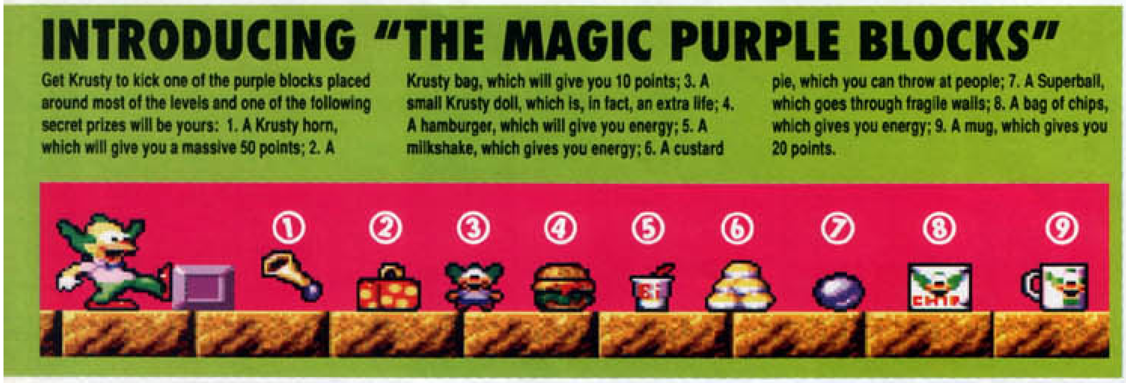
Here are the odds 'n' sods which help Krusty lead the rats to their death

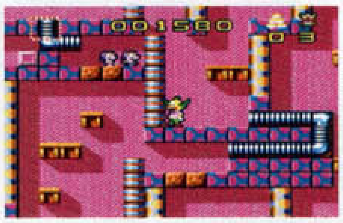
The graphics are very representative of The Simpsons as-seen-on-TV, and Krusty zooms around with astounding fluidity. The rest of the Simpsons family make little cameo appearances as rat-killing machine operators. The accompanying music is good to a point, the point being that there is no option to turn it off. The spot effects, however, add to the overall appeal of the game – the sound of Krusty's little laugh when he finishes a level is just one such example.

This is a fun game with bags of gameplay. There's even a password option which improves the longevity of the game, a

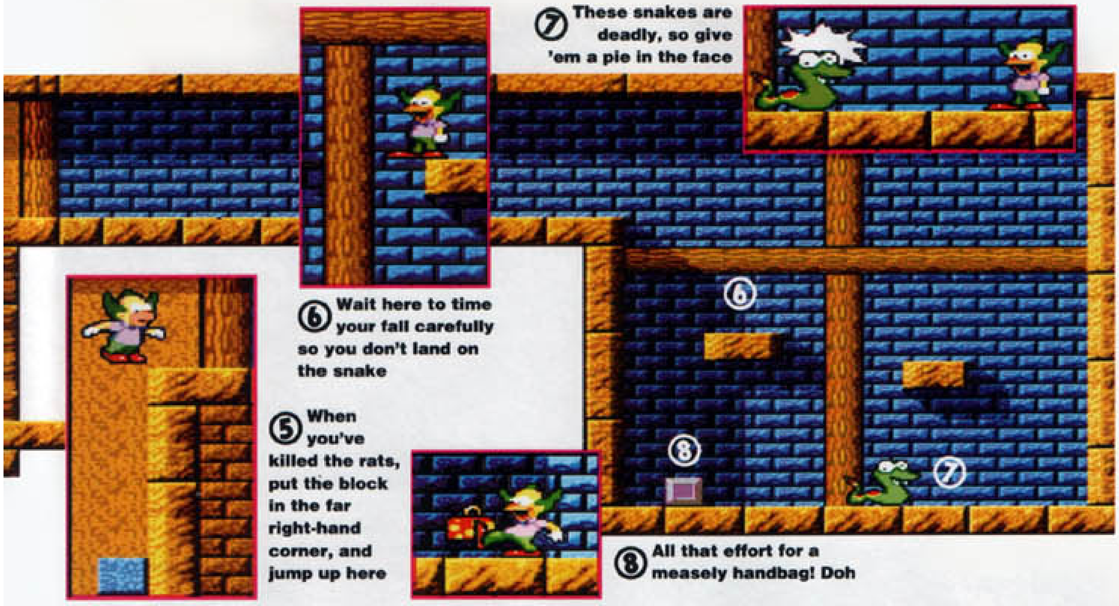
INTRODUCING "THE MAGIC PURPLE BLOCKS"

Get Krusty to kick one of the purple blocks placed around most of the levels and one of the following secret prizes will be yours: 1. A Krusty horn, which will give you a massive 50 points; 2. A Krusty bag, which will give you 10 points; 3. A small Krusty doll, which is, in fact, an extra life; 4. A hamburger, which will give you energy; 5. A milkshake, which gives you energy; 6. A custard pie, which you can throw at people; 7. A Superball, which goes through fragile walls; 8. A bag of chips, which gives you energy; 9. A mug, which gives you 20 points.





Things become a bit trickier on the third level. Just kick the barrels in the right order and it's all over



⑦ These snakes are deadly, so give 'em a pie in the face

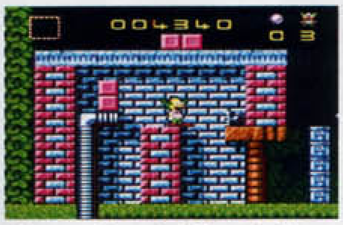
⑥ Wait here to time your fall carefully so you don't land on the snake

⑤ When you've killed the rats, put the block in the far right-hand corner, and jump up here

⑧ All that effort for a measely handbag! Doh

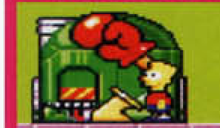
ble is what Amanda Cook likes to do in...

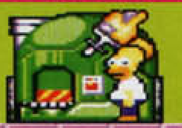
SUPER FUN HOUSE

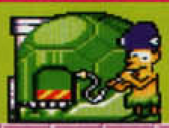


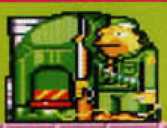
OK, so you've got all the rats into the glass jars, but how do you get them into that pipe? Tricky eh?

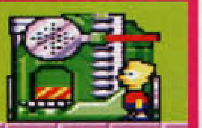
SIMPSON CHARACTERS BECOME RAT KILLERS


Level one: Bart Simpson. Little Bart kicks off on level one with a giant boxing machine (complete with glove), which punches the rodents into pancakes


Level two: Homer Simpson. Old man Homer gives the furry fiends a shock when they meet him, in the shape a massive 20,000 volts of laser energy

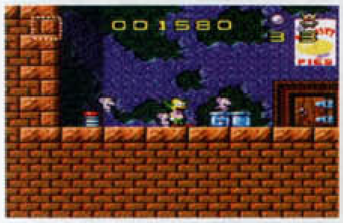

Level three: Sideshow Mel. Good old Mel gets to grips with the rats by filling his lungs as much as he can and then blowing the blighters into oblivion


Level four: Cpl Punishment. Corporal Punishment feels a bit peckish, having stood guard all day long. So as soon as a kebab et rat strolls along, it's chow time

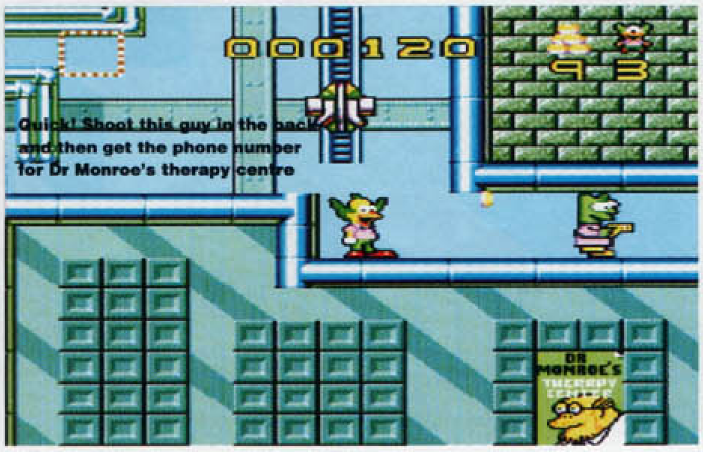

Level five: Bart Simpson. Bart really must hate these rats because he's back again, and he's brought some sort of mincing machine with him

game which gets progressively tougher and should have you kicking the screen in frustration. Apart from this little quibble, there isn't a whole lot wrong with *Krusty's Super Fun House.*

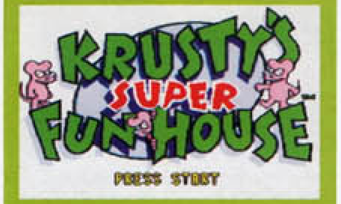
® Amanda Cook



Let the rats fall into the jars and pick them up. Kick and break the jars, letting the rats out to certain death



Quick! Shoot this guy in the back and then get the phone number for Dr Monroe's therapy centre



PUBLISHER: Acclaim

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: August '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Acclaim: 0962 877788

You're on your own!

Only one level of skill, but the game gets progressively harder

You start out with three lives and can earn more as you go along

No, but there is a password option

Five stages, each with a number of levels, which total over sixty

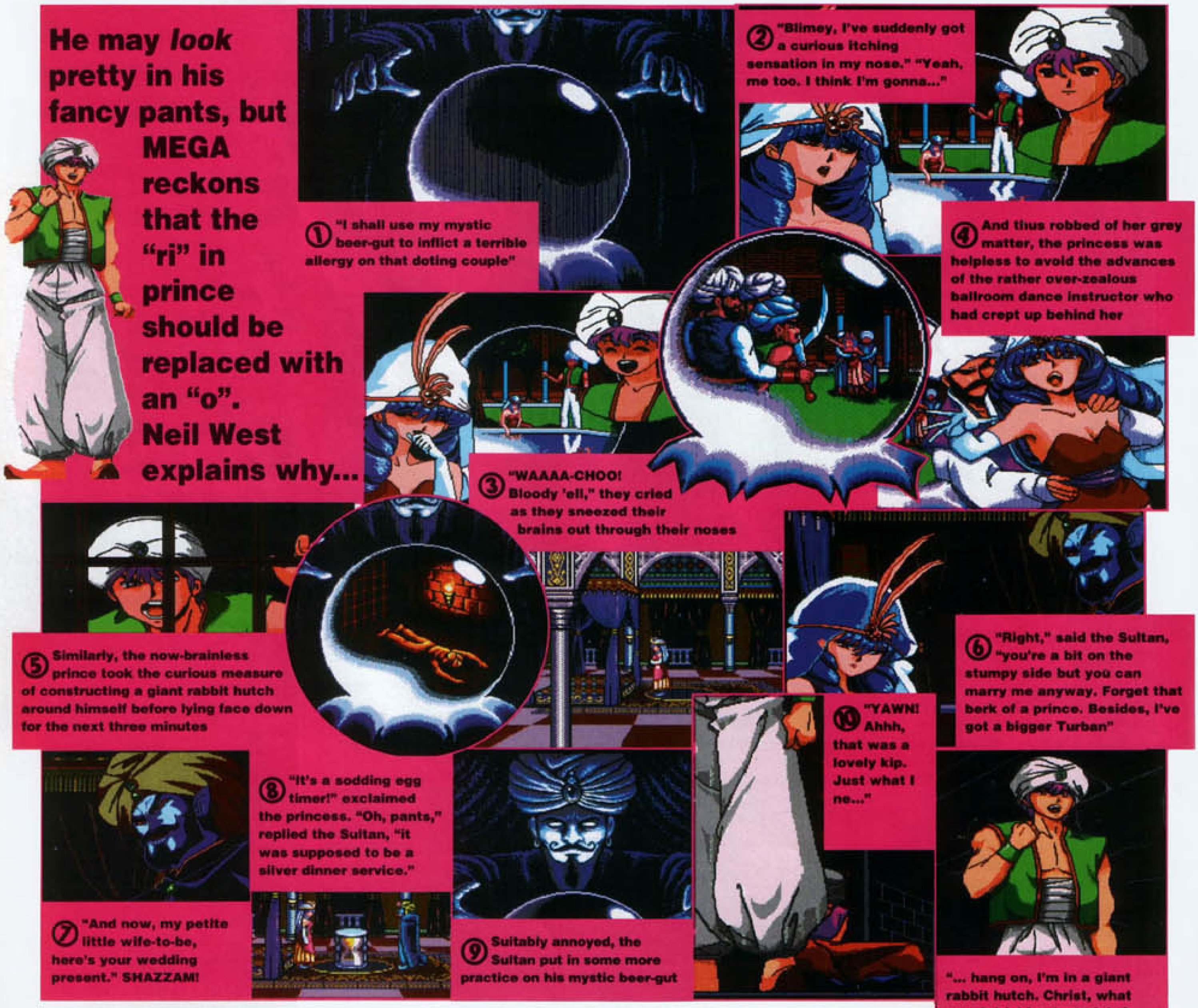
GRAPHICS ●●●●●●●●○○	8
SOUND ●●●●●●●○○○	7
GAMEPLAY ●●●●●●○○○○	6
GAME SIZE ●●●●●●○○○○	6
ADDICTION ●●●●●●●○○○	7

A platform-puzzler with class, but the passwords will help you finish it quickly and you probably won't want to come back to it

80 PERCENT

PRINCE OF PERSIA

He may *look* pretty in his fancy pants, but MEGA reckons that the "ri" in prince should be replaced with an "o". Neil West explains why...



① "I shall use my mystic beer-gut to inflict a terrible allergy on that doting couple"

② "Blimey, I've suddenly got a curious itching sensation in my nose." "Yeah, me too. I think I'm gonna..."

③ "WAAAA-CHOO! Bloody 'ell," they cried as they sneezed their brains out through their noses

④ And thus robbed of her grey matter, the princess was helpless to avoid the advances of the rather over-zealous ballroom dance instructor who had crept up behind her

⑤ Similarly, the now-brainless prince took the curious measure of constructing a giant rabbit hutch around himself before lying face down for the next three minutes

⑥ "Right," said the Sultan, "you're a bit on the stumpy side but you can marry me anyway. Forget that berk of a prince. Besides, I've got a bigger Turban"

⑦ "And now, my petite little wife-to-be, here's your wedding present." SHAZZAM!

⑧ "It's a sodding egg timer!" exclaimed the princess. "Oh, pants," replied the Sultan, "it was supposed to be a silver dinner service."

⑨ Suitably annoyed, the Sultan put in some more practice on his mystic beer-gut

⑩ "YAWN! Ahhh, that was a lovely kip. Just what I ne..."

"... hang on, I'm in a giant rabbit hutch. Christ, what was I drinking last night? And where's my bird?"

Prince Of Persia is a platform game with a difference. That difference lies in the animation, which is rotoscoped from the actions of a real person. The way your character moves is more impressively realistic than, well, just about anything there's ever been. If you've never come across the game before, your jaw will drop as you watch him run, jump, crawl, climb and swing around in a breathtaking display of acrobatics that give the game an amazingly atmospheric quality – and that's before you've even really started playing it. But man cannot live by fancy animations alone, so how good is the game which is hiding in there beneath all the gloss?

Well, it's okay...

There's a lot of it...

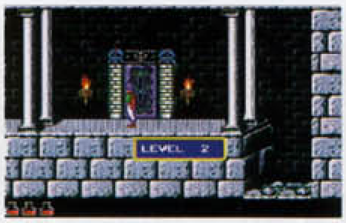
There's a lot of exploring and discovering stuff to do...

But, at the end of the day, you're going, I suspect, to be pretty disappointed with this one. Why? Here's why.

For a game that's showcasing the Mega CD (three hundred quid's worth of state-of-the-art video game technology) there's nothing whatsoever in this *Prince Of Persia* that distinguishes it from, say, the Master System version. Oh, sure, the graphics are a fraction neater (only a fraction, mind you), the sound's a good deal sexier (a collection of not-especially-melodic but beautifully-executed – CD, remember – tunes twitter away charmingly as you play), and it's got a useful front end that lets you define, among other things, how sensitive you want the controls to be. But all the flashy expensive hardware for which you've just paid a hell of a lot of money has gone completely and utterly to waste. Sprite scaling? Rotation? Use of colossal memory space? None of that in here, guv.

A complete waste of hardware capability

You want an example of what I'm talking about? I hate to say it, but the (more sensitive readers should look away at this point) Super NES version of *Prince Of Persia* rips the heart out of this and dances on its grave. The features of Nintendo's machine are fully exploited and a whole clutch of new levels (8 more on top of the original game's 12) are added to extend the life of a game which shouldn't tax your abilities for too long.



What's the score behind the door? I'll be blowed if I know

Looking at this version, you'll wonder why it couldn't have been done on a plain, ordinary, common-or-garden Mega Drive cart. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying, "look at how good the SNES is" (I haven't gone David Icke just yet). I'm saying, "look at the waste of hardware capability, look at the waste of game potential and just imagine what *Prince Of Persia* could have been". The Mega CD version could have knocked the SNES game right out of the ball park without breaking into a sweat. But as it is, it doesn't.

But hang on, though, I'm getting a little ahead of myself. I can hear the voices of a thousand readers, and they're all saying, "But what's it all about, anyway?". Here's what.

Right, the plot. You're a guy (a prince, as it happens). You've got a babe (a princess, logically). And there's a bad guy (evil sultan type. Boo, hiss, etc.). The bad guy nicks your babe, on account of her unfeasible gorgeousness, and decrees that he's going to marry her.

Being a rich and powerful sultan-type dude as well as an evil one, this is something which it is apparently totally within his power to do (despite any thoughts the princess might have on the matter) and what's more he's in a bit of a hurry. He's going to tie the knot with his reluctant paramour in just one hour's time (yep, that's one hour; sixty minutes; 3600 – count 'em! – seconds), unless you can dissuade him with the aid of your trusty sword. All fine and groovy then, yes? Just pop up to the front door, knock three times and when Mr Nasty answers, lop his head off.

WARNING!

This Mega CD game is a Japanese import and, therefore, it will not work on an imported American Mega CD. Nor will it work on an official UK Mega CD (when Sega finally gets round to releasing the beast). If you don't already own a Mega CD, then we recommend that (for the sake of software availability in the future) you wait for an official one. Check out page 10 for the full story. Sorted.

Well, no. You see, the sultan lives in a big (no, really – it's enormous) castle, and before you can drop in for tea, you're going to have to navigate your way through its labyrinthine passages. And kill people.

So that's enough storyline, back to the action. While *Prince Of Persia* gives you a far more sophisticated control system than most platform games, there's a price to pay. That price, in this particular case, is fluidity. The prince moves in fairly big steps of predetermined size (you can take little careful baby steps, but they're just as measured), which means that for the majority of the time, he's only half under your control – you're just triggering the execution of set animated movements. In other words, once he starts to do something, all the joypad-wrenching in the world won't make him stop until he's completed the move. This, in turn, means that to get any kind of smooth flow to the game, you have to plan every move about a second in advance – try to jump when you're bombing along towards the edge of a platform, and the bold prince will simply ignore you and plunge to his death at the bottom of some massive pit. Prat.

What this all boils down to, then, is that while *Prince Of Persia* is a great game which will make your friends go "Woof!" for five minutes, you'll get, firstly, annoyed and, secondly, bored with it before you're halfway through it. Below the surface it's pretty thin material for a game, and although it's beautifully done, all this style-over-content stuff isn't what we really want to see from this potentially astounding bit of kit. There, I said it.

® *Neil West*

PRINCE OF PERSIA

PUBLISHER: Victor

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now in Japan

MEGA CD: Japanese import

CONTACT: Telegames: 0533 516861

It's just you versus the fat sultan

Just the one level of skill

One life, but you have several units of energy

Save-game facility

Fourteen levels to plough through

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	5
GAME SIZE	6
ADDICTION	6

A nice game to play, but not something that you'll get a lot of value-for-money from. And a complete waste of the capabilities of the Mega CD

41 PERCENT

GET A GRIP!

Left, Right

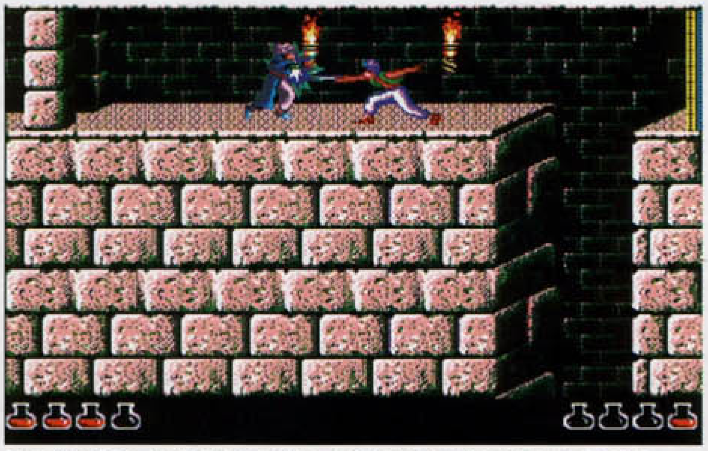
Creep, hang, thrust sword

Jump and climb up

Jump, parry with sword

Crouch

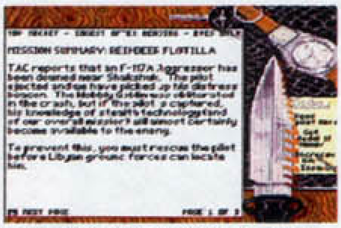
No function



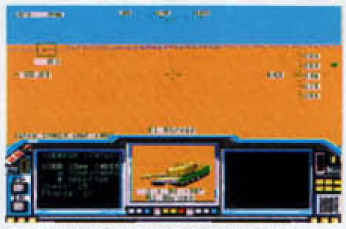
Take that! Yes, that's the last time you laugh at *my* pantaloons, matey

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

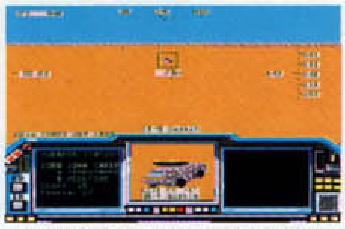
From the magnificent men who brought you *F-22 Interceptor* comes an excellent new flight sim. Paul Mellerick was keen to get into the cockpit of this one, only to discover that he has a peculiar natural ability to crash a helicopter into everything imaginable



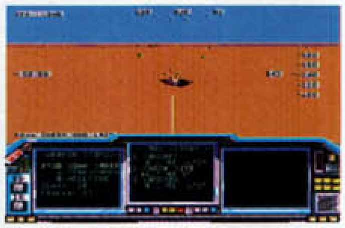
Aha! The top secret details of our attack mission. Read them, rip out the cart and swallow it for safety



The guys in the M1 tank won't be chuffed if we keep aiming our gun at them. Better find a real target...



...aha! This'll do. A rather sad little SAM launcher. It'll go up like the Fourth of July on bonfire night



And there we have it. What a nice sight. Some bent bits of metal and the odd tooth is all they'll find

Almost a year ago, *F-22 Interceptor* from Electronic Arts gave Mega Drive flight freaks their first chance to satisfy their need for speed. Budding Tom Cruises leapt into their console cockpits and took to the skies, any unwary opponents plummeting to the ground in their wake. Unlike *Afterburner* and *G-Loc* (which were never meant to offer anything other than ten pence-swallowing, five-minute, adrenaline rushes) *F22 Interceptor* was a real flying game. And now it's got a big brother – *LHX Attack Chopper.*

LEONARDO DA VINCI

We've got a lot to thank Leonardo Da Vinci for. He gave us Butane gas, double-sided sticky tape, bikini briefs and, of course, the Mona Lisa. He also had the annoying habit of designing things 400 years before they were of use to anyone. In fact, he came up with the design for a helicopter on a rainy Wednesday morning when he should have been in double physics. This particular invention was completely ignored by mankind for quite a few centuries, but then, when it looked like the hovercraft was going to win the most-exciting-invention-of-the-century award, people began to take note of the 'copter.

Things have moved on a bit since those crazy renaissance days. The helicopter went on to become a big blobby thing which was commonly seen in duff Sixties programmes like Whirly Birds and The Streets of San Fransisco. In the Eighties it developed into a power-house of electronics and Orbit™ sugar-free gum and was a common extra in similarly duff programmes like Airwolf and The A Team. Its popularity hasn't gone unnoticed by the US Air Force, either, who loved Jan Michael Vincent's Air Wolf so much that they decided to make a real one.

Which brings us nicely to EA's (or the Electronic Arts Air Force, as they like to be called) helicopter flight sim.

LOVE AND BULLETS

Power-up your Mega Drive and you're faced with the choice of which chopper to fly. Firstly, there's the LHX Attack Chopper itself – a spectacularly advanced piece of kit. Its wonderful camouflage paint job makes it something like a stealth fighter with rotors. It has been designed to evade radar and nip into high-security war zones, where it can blow seven shades of shampoo out of the hun. Sticklers for reality, however, will choose to pilot a humble AH-64 helicopter, a real aircraft without the stealthy bits.

Once you've chosen your chopper, it's time to turn your attention to the hun. The hun in this case are the Libyans and it's your job to give them as hard a time as possible throughout a series of sorties in the desert. The nature of each mission varies greatly (there are 30 missions in total, of ten different types). One trip may see you blasting the hell out of some chemical warfare bunkers, while the next may involve you picking up a couple of stranded CIA

TAKE TO THE CONTROLS

"Don't worry – I know it's your first lesson, Miss Wilkinson. Simply apply gentle pressure to the cyclic, while keeping the collective under control. Then tilt the chopper carefully and aarrgh! We're going down. Release the controls. We're all dead! Take your foot off the clutch, Miss Wilk.. no, don't press that! Leave the throttles alone! Look, why don't you start on a Metro City, and move on to fast attack 'copters when you've done some road driving and you're a bit more confident about handling $50 million worth of 'copter."

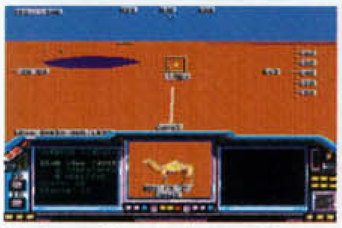
TRICKY TERMS

No one can accuse MEGA of not taking this war thing seriously. Here's our jargon-busting guide to everything you'll need to know once you're in the cockpit of your chosen 'copter

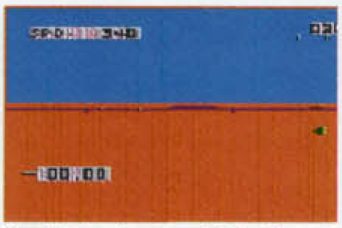
FIRE ZONE:
The place where loads of scrapping happens. This also tends to be the place where loads of people die. It should therefore be approached with caution, a white flag and some calamine lotion in case Johnny starts shooting the place up.

THE HUN:
During times of war the enemy is always referred to as the hun. During peaceful times same are referred to as "our partners in Europe", "our foreign friends", "our German cousins", or "benefactors" (of our arms trade).

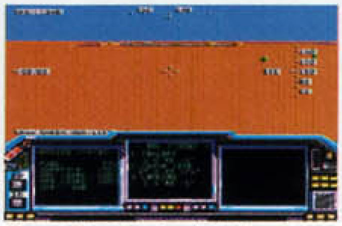
FRIENDLY FIRE:
When soldiers are shot by their own side, it's called being killed by friendly fire. The Americans seem to be particularly good at shooting loads of perfectly good allied troops, which explains why your average British Marine dreads going on friendly exercises with Americans.



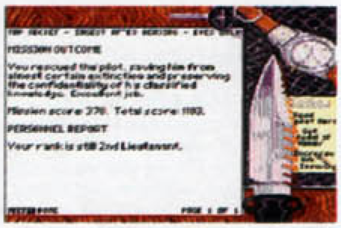
That camel is carrying secrets which will put the West back five years. So shoot it. Sorry humpy



If you're bored, you can look at the world (well, desert) from the viewpoint of any enemy you lock onto



"Something big ahead, sir." "OK Smithers, let's shoot it, then run away quickly. What a jape, eh?"



MISSION OUTCOME

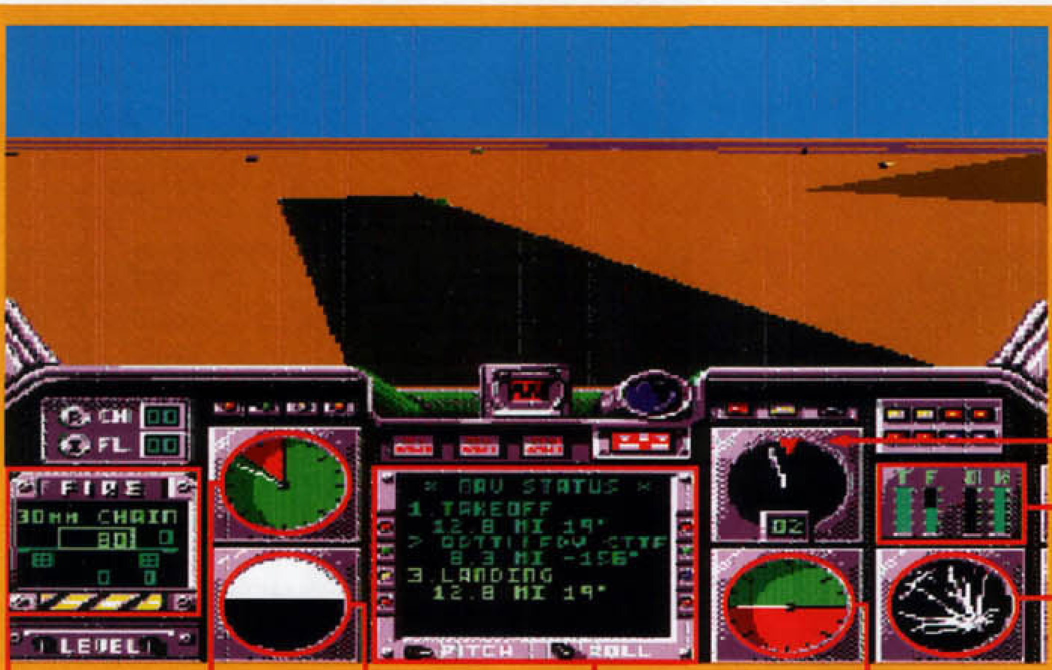
You rescued the pilot, saving him from almost certain extinction and preserving the confidentiality of his classified knowledge. Excellent job.

Mission score: 270. Total score: 1193.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Your rank is still 2nd Lieutenant.

As a reward, go and fire missiles at any wildlife that you may find in existence in the harsh desert



× NAV STATUS ×
1.TAKEOFF
12.8 MI 19°
[illegible]
8.3 MI -156°
3.LANDING
12.8 MI 19°

GET A GRIP!

D-pad: Controls direction and speed
D-pad and Start: Controls height
Ⓐ Fires cannon
Ⓑ Fires other weaponry
Ⓒ Cycles through all the weapons

agents who are being held in a POW camp.

Before each mission you receive a concise briefing (in the form of graphical screens), which incorporates details about the nature of the trip, the reception you're likely to receive, the weather conditions and any other special instructions. It's well worth noting down the essence of this briefing, because it's all too easy, once you're in the air, to assume that all you have to do is blow the hell out of something, swagger straight into the action and create a steaming great crater the size of Pittsburgh, only to discover later that you were (in fact) supposed to pick up a couple of measly hostages. So, once you've absorbed the essential ingredients of your mission, you can actually take the helicopter up into the air.

FLYING HIGH, OR NOT?

Once you're in the cockpit, it's time to try to work out how (exactly) to control one of these things. The LHX has an automatic target-sighting computer, automatic navigational aids and automatic chaff/flare functions (wow!), all of which leave you wondering what exactly you're meant to do, bar chewing gum and smiling innocently at the enemy as you razor them in half with the chain gun. To fully control the LHX takes two joypads, and you'll soon discover that there are loads of control functions with which to become familiar before feeling comfortable in a combat (hey!) situation.

The actual game-screens open up with a view from the cockpit, in essence a view of the runway and your home base. To take off, you have to use the rather awkward combination of Start and Up on the joypad. (You'll have to get used to this, as the Start key is used in quite a few instances to increase the number of control options.) To actually move the 'copter forwards, you have to tilt the nose downward. The angle of tilt dictates the speed you'll fly at, so it's perfectly acceptable to tilt the whole thing backwards and fly in reverse (try doing this in a MiG). At this point you can get some height before proceeding to the rendezvous point. Unfortunately, the top speed of the LHX is a rather pedestrian 340 mph, so it does take a little while to get from base to rendezvous.

As you whizz over the desert, the targeting computer picks out all sorts of interesting sights. If one is to believe EA, the Libyan desert is scattered with enough military hardware to make Terminator 7. This does mean that you can pick off ⊖

Once you've chosen your chopper, it's time to turn your attention to the hun

SORTIE:
A mission. This expression was developed during World War One to fool enemy soldiers into a false sense of security. They didn't have a clue what the word actually meant and thought that it was just a funny term for a holiday. Hence, when a commanding officer asked for a few brave men to go on a two-week sortie, he had loads of volunteers. (Commanding officers are nasty like that.)

COMBAT SITUATION:
Another Yank term. This describes the time when troops check their underwear and fire off a few zillion quid's worth of military hardware at anything that moves.

LZ:
Landing zone. This is the tiny piece of scrubland on which soldiers are plonked before tearing off into the bushes in the hope of avoiding having their wigs blown off by the downdraft from the helicopter's rotors.

VIEWS FROM THE COCKPIT

This series of pictures shows some of the views available to you from the cockpit of your LHX.

To access them you must pause the game, then go to the tactical map screen, where you can cycle through the available views. There are slot and chase views of your craft, as well as glimpses of the target, any waypoints, and even a view from the front of any missiles you launch. It's an excellent one, this – you see the target growing, closing-in rapidly and exploding in a rather fetching ball of flames. Crazy or what?

Ooh! That's a pretty star. I wonder which one it is. Never mind. I'll make a wish on it anyway...

... I wish I could sort out this sortie, unseen to the SAMs owned by the enemy

I also wish that, when I fire missiles which have a 35% chance of hitting the bad guys, they always get 'em

Oh. Time to stop wishing and start targeting some serious weaponry. Here's a juicy ground installation

It's nice to know that our guys are out there at night, keeping the peace and terrifying the locals

(Yawn...) I'm feeling tired now. I want me bed. Smithers, turn this thing around and let's go home

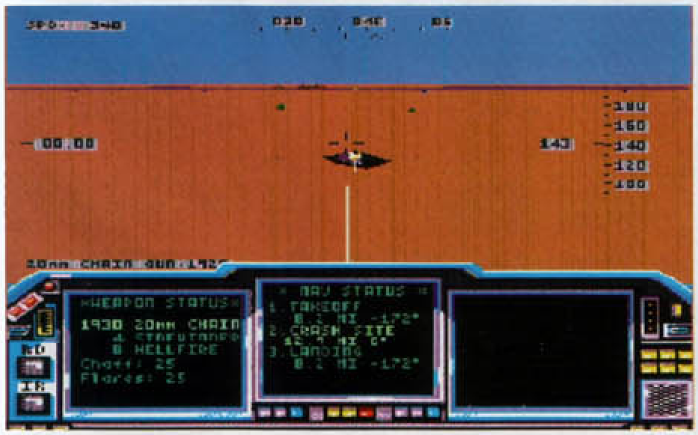
It's lucky, the enemy don't seem to see you as easily at night. Might be because it's, er, dark, really

The ground view lets you gasp in awe as your LHX (or AH-64) belts overhead and into the distance

The target view lets you get a close-up of whatever it is that's just about to be turned into a pile of rubble

the odd troop carrier or radar sight en route to the strike zone and, for all you sadists out there, even the occasional innocent camel, sitting just waiting to be blown up by a Hellfire missile.

The graphics which appear during these trips are, it has to be said, rather bland. I mean, the desert isn't noted for its stunning variety of landscape, is it? So don't expect to see any skyscrapers or petrol stations. Instead, you'll see the odd bush, a few small hills and tonnes and tonnes of lethal weaponry installations.



The LHX has got video screens in the cockpit instead of the oh-so-old-fashioned dials, switches and other droppings you find in the AH-64

Once your weaponry computer has picked out a target you'd like to go after, you can pick a weapon and zip down and zap the unsuspecting blokes to smithereens. Obviously the distance from which you can attack is dictated by the weapon you're using. Thus the Hellfire and Sidewinder missiles can work from a couple of miles away, while your chain gun needs to be within 2000 metres before it'll do any damage – anyone who's ever played *Desert Strike* knows the score.

VIEW TO A KILL

So what of the missions themselves? Well, as I explained, there are plenty of different ones to fly. Unfortunately, you can't pick and choose which ones you do initially as they have to be tackled in order. However, once you've successfully flown a particular mission, you're rewarded with a password which enables you to skip this mission the next time you take up your LHX.

The difficulty of each sortie depends on a number of factors: the distance between yourself and the rendezvous point, the number of enemy aircraft in the air, the number of enemy gun installations and the amount of time you'll have to hang around in a vulnerable situation at the fire zone.

To complete a mission you simply take off and follow the way-points to each rendezvous. Way-points are electronic markers which direct you straight to the correct bit of desert. Once you're there, you can pick up/blow up and then get the hell out.

The best missions are the ones in which you have to fight off loads of enemy fire while picking up POW hostages. It's very easy to perish during these missions because, while you're hovering over the helpless little man, the hun is lobbing a few thousand-weight of metal at you.

On some of these missions it's jolly handy to have a friend doing all the firing. All the weapon functions can be controlled from the second joypad, so while you're doing all the fancy acrobatics, your pal can be the gunner. If someone else is doing the shooting, you're likely to last a lot longer because you won't lose control of the

'NAM:
Veterans of the whole war scene refer to Vietnam as 'Nam. This is not to be confused with Chippenham, which is a crap market-town with a nightclub called Golddiggers which MEGA team members never go to. Say no more.

SCUD:
A large missile which doesn't work terribly well. In fact, as missiles go, this one's about as much use as a water bomb.

BUNKER:
This is the place where all the commanding officers spend the entire war. A bunker is almost impossible to blow up, which means the officers can get on with doomed wartime romances.

WARTIME ROMANCES, BRITISH:
During the war, all the officers had short-lived flings with those birds who, as well as donning Pyrex bowls on either side of their heads, used garden hoes to shovel plastic aeroplanes and tanks across really large maps. The officers would chat them up, hug them during an

'copter and fly into hills or, if you're anything like me, straight into the ground.

If the enemy hit you, you may well lose control of part of your LHX. If the radar goes dead, for example, you might lose the on-board computer. It is still possible, however, to complete missions without this seemingly essential piece of equipment. It is also possible to complete sorties with only one engine – it'll just take a bit longer, that's all. If both engines are lost, however, you could be up there for days. Think about it.

Should you take one too many hits, the screen will go a lovely shade of blood red and the mission will end. This is because you are dead. The only thing to do at this point is try again (a second chance to win a war. What next?).

CHOPPER ATTACK

LHX Attack Chopper is not just a bog standard shoot-'em-up. It has got plenty of depth and is still a lot of fun. If, however, your idea of a good value Mega Drive game is beating it in the same afternoon that you bring it back from the shop, then steer clear of *LHX* – even in the highly unlikely event of you wading through all the missions on one of the easier levels, there is always the challenge of the hard or even very hard levels left to tackle.

Graphically the programmers are working the Mega Drive jolly hard. While there's no slow-down when there's lots happening on screen, the update rate isn't the quickest in the world, so things can get a tad juddery. The cockpit graphics and remote camera views, however, are excellent and they add greatly to the atmosphere.

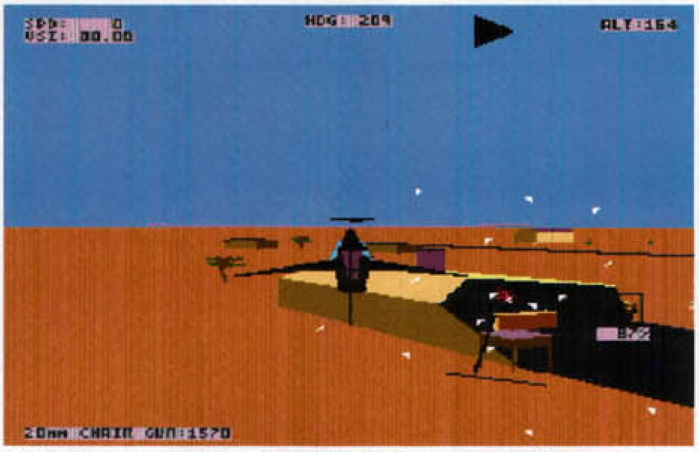
The sound is also pretty radical. Lots of nice whizzy, bangy sounds ring out when you blow the enemy up, and when you lose an engine, the tone drops to signal a loss of engine power.

To conclude, *LHX Attack Chopper* is a game to really get your teeth into. If you're bored witless with all those duff shoot-'em-ups, which have all the depth of an El Dorado actress, then check this out.

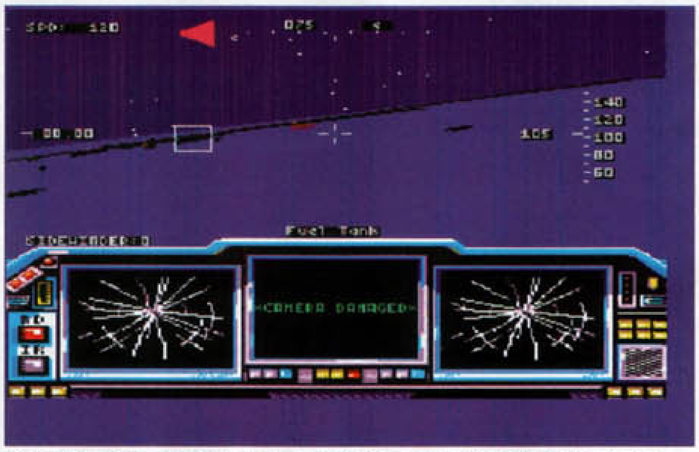
As opposed to previous Mega Drive flight games (and even *F22 Interceptor* for that matter), however, *LHX* isn't thrill-a-minute stuff. It is, in fact, just like war itself – a few tense moments of waiting and then some frenzied moments of action in which it's extremely easy to die and/or ruin your brand new Calvin Kleins. This game requires strategic planning and individual tactics, as well as a quick trigger finger and A1 hand-eye co-ordination.

Gung Ho pilots will love the depth of gameplay while laser-spurting sprogs might be better off sticking to *Mickey Mouse*. Now, where did I leave the ignition keys?

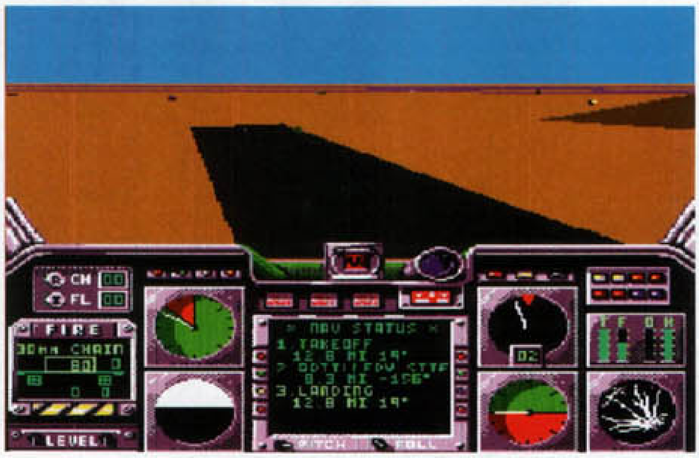
® *Paul Mellerick*



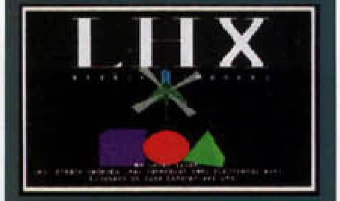
You can see some corking views of the destruction caused by your 'copter. Here, a quiet, inoffensive warehouse has just taken a serious cannoning



Good though the LHX is, you can still take a damn good kicking from the enemy. Your instruments are usually the first things to go, making life hard



Oh dear, I've been shot. Honestly, until this, I was doing brilliantly. I was.



PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: August '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA: 0753 549442

One player, but you can get a friend to help by using the second joypad

There are five levels of skill

You've got only one life

Passwords are awarded upon successful completion of a mission

30 missions of 10 different types

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 9

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 8

Get this! *LHX Attack Chopper* is a game with real depth. The control system is fairly complicated, but who said flying a chopper was easy? With 5 different skill levels and 30 missions to complete, check this out if you want a real challenge

88 PERCENT

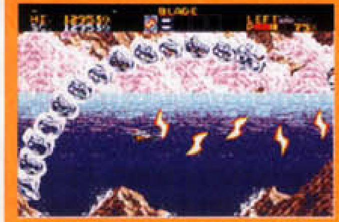
air-raid, and then perish in an impossible (but ultimately successful) mission two weeks before the war ends.

WARTIME ROMANCES: AMERICAN:
The American lures the bird with some crap stockings and some chewing gum. Then he sings "You've lost that loving feeling" to them, hugs them during an air-raid and then perishes during an impossible (and ultimately unsuccessful) mission two weeks before the

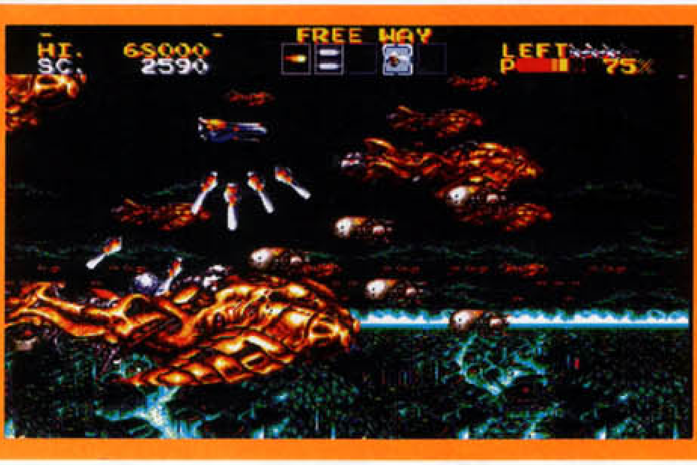
Americans decide to drop out of the war because people are getting hurt.

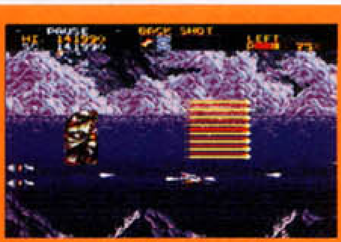
LETHAL DELIGHT

If you're looking for lush graphics, then you've come to the right place. Don't stand about looking too long, though, or you're likely to get a homing missile where you don't want one. Catch my drift?



Harmless really. This snake-like thing just flies above you





Above: This mid-level boss fires a single red beam at you and if you break it up, he gets a bit miffed and decides to really let you have it

Left: Don't worry about the big ships, just fire at the blue balls on top of them and they'll fly past you

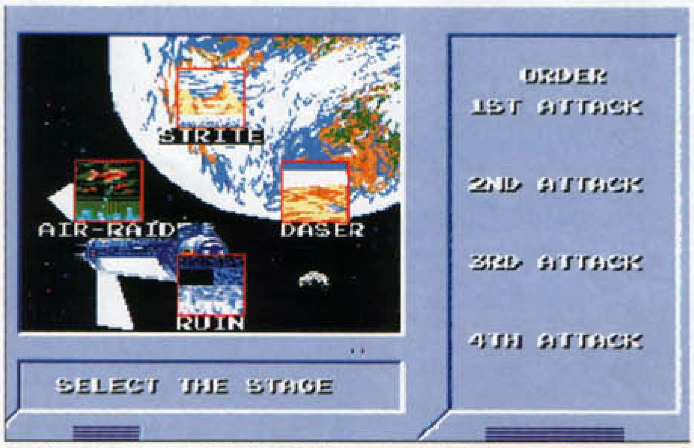
THUNDERF

Can you hear it in the mountains? *Thunderforce IV* has been a long time coming, but Neil (not prepared to review a game without actually playing it) West was the first in the queue when it finally arrived...

It has been quite a while since *Thunderforce III* redrew the boundaries of what was and what wasn't possible on the Mega Drive, and knocked everybody's socks off in the process. And as far as graphical excitement is concerned, in all the time since its release, nothing has really come along to better it.

Until now, that is. Eager shoot-'em-up lovers the world over have been completely beside themselves with excitement as the arrival of *Thunderforce IV* has drawn nearer (at least it's given them something to talk about). Now the waiting is over (as long as you've got a Japanese SCART Mega Drive, the only one which will run the game at the moment, that is), the question that's been on the Pet Shop Boys' lips has to be asked – was it worth it? Well, before we answer that, let's see what you're actually getting for your money.

Thunderforce IV brings you 11 levels of high-speed, horizontally-scrolling, hard as nails shoot-'em-up action. In most of these levels there's a cheeky little hint of verticality to the scroll too, as the stages are roughly two screens high. This means that you can weave around a bit and simply avoid many of the baddies by moving to a bit of the screen where they, rather dimly, can't apparently see you. Perhaps they should invest a few quid in a couple of sets of wing mirrors instead of some of the ridiculously huge weaponry that they have to lug around the sky.



No, it's not a cheat, this is the built-in level select that you get when you start the game. Press Up, Down, Left or Right to choose any order you want

Talking of weaponry, you've got some pretty crap stuff at the start (so what's new?), but picking up icons from destroyed nasties gives you... well, check out the weapons box. You can have up to five different kinds of gun at any one time, which you can select at the touch of a button, and when you die you only lose the one that was actually in use at the time. You can also select the speed at which your ship moves – a press of the A button cycles through 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% of full tilt, while holding it down allows you to move up by 1% at a time, just in case you feel that, say, 53% is your absolute optimum speed. Continuing the theme of selection, you can also choose to tackle the first four levels in any order you like, but beyond these little tweaks we're talking about shoot-'em-up business as usual. Time, methinks, for some nitty gritty...

> **Beneath the graphical gymnastics, the game is decidedly average**

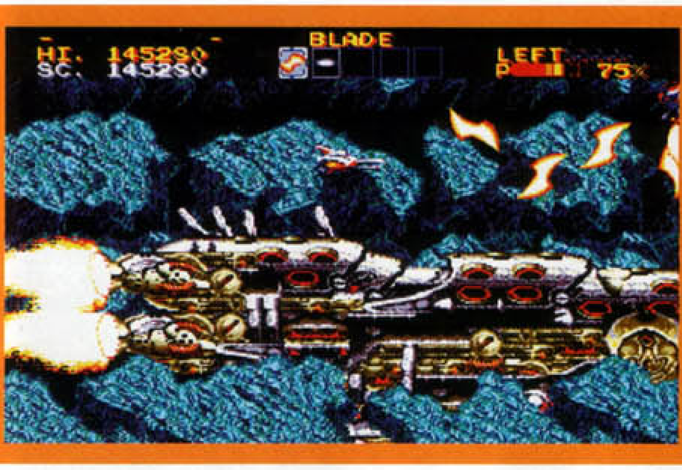
Thunderforce IV is one of the best three Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups ever. To be precise, it's the third one (behind only *Hellfire* and *Aero Blasters*, and replacing *Thunderforce III*). The fact that it stands head and shoulders above most of the competition is, sadly, only due to the utter crapness of most of the competition.

EXQUISITE GRAPHICS

But let's not take anything away from *Thunderforce*-the fourth. For a start, we're most assuredly looking at the Mega Drive's most beautiful graphics yet. Huge, bold, dramatic landscapes are the order of the day, the desert backdrop of the third level being particularly stunning. Ground-based enemies scuttle below the surface, popping up only to fire at you and then diving back underground like something out of Dune. Meanwhile, a sandstorm is whipping across the entire screen, obscuring enemy attacks and creating a real atmosphere of frenzied confusion. Later on, you'll fly across the surface of a beautiful sea with God-only-knows how many layers of parallax. Alternatively, you'll peel off into the sky to marvel at some beautiful cloud cover, which changes colour as the level progresses.

RUN-OF-THE-MILL MEANIES

The gorgeousness of the backdrops, though, only serves to make the enemies



GET A GRIP!

D-pad – Moves your ship around

Ⓐ Choose your speed by selecting a percentage

Ⓑ Fires the currently selected weapon

Ⓒ Selects weapon

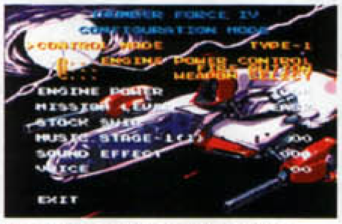
Left: Get ready to face the boss

ORCE IV

themselves all the more disappointing. Not a single one of them has any character. They are all just shapeless blobs of colour which look like they could have been taken from any shoot-'em-up we've seen during the last three years. It's really hard to get worked up about an alien meanie when it looks, not only like every other alien meanie in the game, but, like a really badly coloured-in cream cake (no matter how many big guns are bristling from it).

The same criticism can be levelled at the actual attacks of the aliens – the majority of which simply appear out of nowhere without any warning. These unpredictable onslaughts make progress through the game more a matter of learning and remembering where to sit, than something which depends on any application of skill.

So, the little aliens are crap. But what about the big ones? Well, they're no different, really. They're also all completely featureless and lifeless but, more importantly, they don't flash when you hit them, which means you can be flying around one until you grow a beard, pumping all manner of hot laser death at it without doing the slightest bit of damage. Since the ships are such big empty blobs of nothingness anyway, it's not altogether obvious exactly which bit you *should* be shooting at. This turns the whole palaver into a real test of endurance.



This is the not-so-secret option screen. To see it just press A, B and C together on the title screen

THUNDER FORCE IV
DO YOU WANT TO CONTINUE?
PRESS START BUTTON TO CONTINUE!

Ah, so you died did you? Well never mind, you've still got six continues left. Go on, what are you waiting for?

EAR-SCORCHING SOUNDTRACK

And then there's the music. Good God, the music's horrible – aimless, twittery, Japanese meanderings of the style that they appear to think symbolises some kind of "rock" music. It attempts to convey excitement simply by being really fast. It fails dismally because it *is* utterly dismal, it really is.

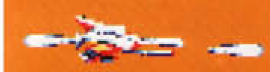
But hey! Let's not be all nasty and negative about this. If the purpose of a game is to impress your friends and provide a couple of weeks of slavish dedication before completion (which then leaves you conveniently free to buy the next one), then *Thunderforce IV* fits the bill exceptionally well. It's just that beneath the graphical gymnastics of the surface, the game really is (and may the mighty Wotan blow my trousers off if I'm wrong) decidedly average.

KABOOM!!!!!

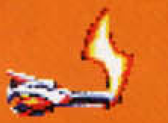
Ow! Ouch. Oh dear.

® *Neil West*

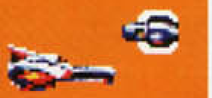
WOOF! I'LL TAKE THE LOT



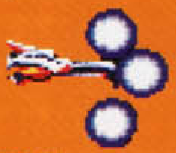
BACK SHOT: Not very powerful, but it does protect you from sneaky attacks



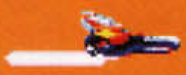
BLADE: Very destructive and it looks good too



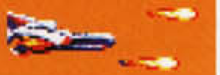
CLAW: These two craft fly around your ship, firing as they go. Very useful



HUNTER: This one's powerful *and* it homes in on its targets



RAIL GUN: Looks after your backside, but it doesn't really cover the front



TWIN SHOT: Your start-up weapon. Not brill, but it's not crap either

THUNDER FORCE IV
©1992 Technosoft

PUBLISHER: Tecnosoft

PRICE: £35 (check with your importer)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames: 0533 516 861

You're on your own

Four, ranging from difficult to mega hard

You start with three but can pick up more en route. Six continues

No battery back-up, no passwords

11 levels of non-stop alien-blasting action

GRAPHICS 9

SOUND 4

GAMEPLAY 5

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 7

Technically amazing, but the only amazing thing about the game underneath is how bog-standard it is. *Aero Blasters* and *Hellfire* stomp all over it, with big boots on

81 PERCENT

Sometime in the future (two, or maybe three weeks from now) everyone gets really cheesed off with football so they decide to beat the crap out of each other. This is *Speedball 2*. It's fast, furious and, er... furry. Andy Dyer dons his chromium cod-piece and hobbles into action

GYM'LL FIX IT

After each game, take your winnings and any cash you've picked up from the field and take yourself off to the gym. Here you can exchange your credits for, um, well nothing. But you can use them to hone your team's abilities.

① These power meters show the current status of either your team or individual player's statistics

② I, G and T stand for individual, goalie and team. Click on theone that you want to boost up with all that luvverly cash

③ If you want the whole team to be boosted instead of an individual, click on this

SPEEDBALL

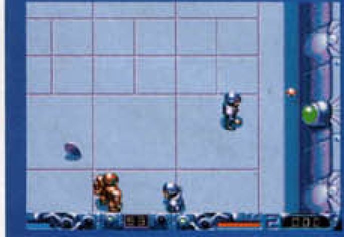
It's gonna be pretty obvious from the screenshots of *Speedball 2* that this isn't a simulation of any real sport, or even one of those obscure team events which Channel Four always broadcasts just to keep a small minority of telly-mad lunatics happy. No, this is pure fiction. Ignore the paper-thin plot about disintegrating values and the emergence of a violent full-contact sport. Who cares? All that matters is that pretend characters can beat the living daylights out of each other in an arena *and* get away with it, and this (I'm sure you'll agree) is the perfect recipe for a rip-roaring game.

UNDERNEATH THE CHROME

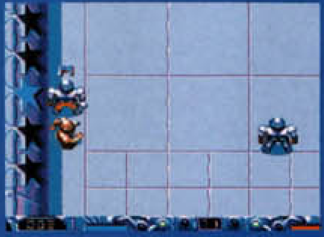
Basically there are two teams, two goals and a ball. Use whatever means you can to score goals, and rack up extra points by injuring people or using the various "gadgets" around the play area (see the box below).

The lack of rules means that there's a fairly large amount of luck involved in the outcome of any one encounter. Passing the ball around is a pretty skillful business but once one of your players and an opponent get into a one-to-one situation, it's a case of thrashing the button and hoping you come out with possession. Getting a couple of goals early in the game is important but, even if the opposition gets an early lead, the game is by no means over. Furthermore, even by following our guide to ways of scoring more points, the element of luck remains,

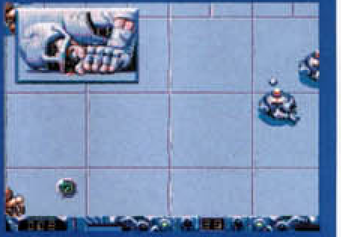
RUTHLESS WAYS OF SCORING POINTS



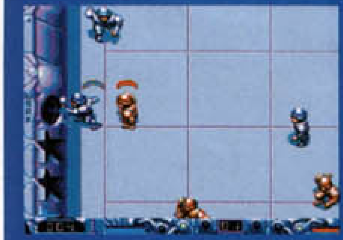
Use the electrobounce to electrify the ball. You can then pummel the enemies with it. What a wheeze!



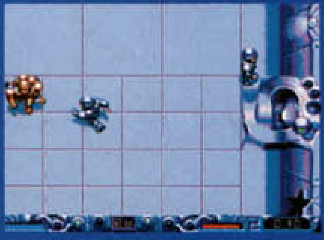
Light up all five stars to secure loadsa points. But any individually lit ones can be switched off again



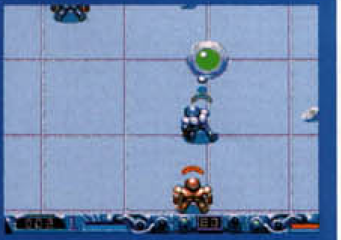
If all else fails, target a victim and keep at him until he's forced to, erm, "retire". More luvverly points



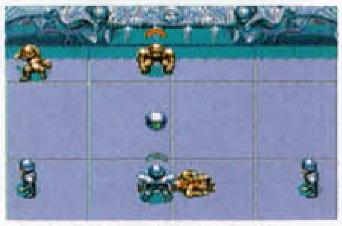
If you get into strife, use the warp gates to whizz the ball to the other side of the field



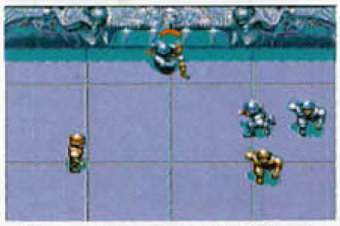
Lob the ball around the multiplier a couple of times and subsequent points will be doubled. Hurrah!



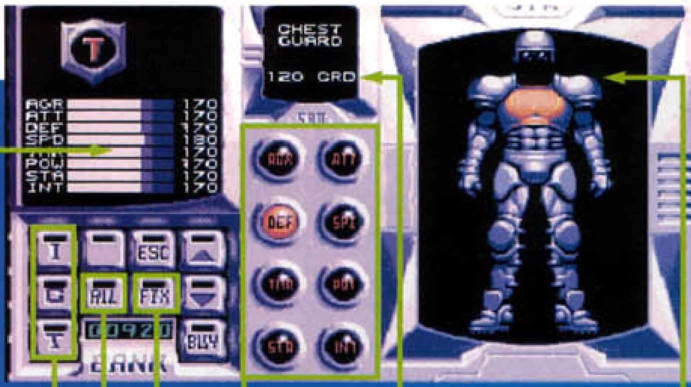
You can clock up lashings of points really quickly by wanging the ball at the bounce domes repeatedly



Here's just one of the ways to score a goal. Approach the goal and lob the ball really high into the air...



... Keep moving forward, duff up the goalie, catch the ball and chuck it in with a smarmy grin on yer face

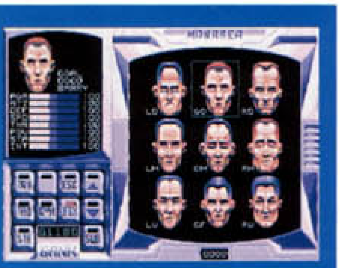


④ Look at the current league fixtures by clicking on this

⑤ These icons correspond to the body parts of your players that can be boosted. From here you can select thighs, arms, shoulders and so on

⑥ Cost of enhancing selected ability

⑦ That's you that is. And whichever limb you've selected with the icons on the left will be highlighted here

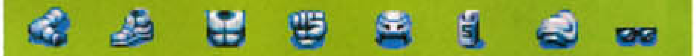


If you don't fancy boosting the whole team's stats, you can enhance each player individually, ie you can concentrate on building up a powerful front line, bump up the midfield or even create an impenetrable defensive line-up. Entering this screen, however, may be harmful to your mental health as all the players have hilariously-dull names, like Barry or Gavin.

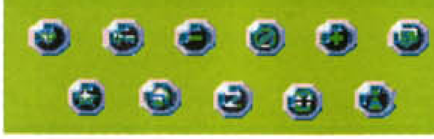
and victory is not guaranteed.

Unlike a game such as *Madden*, in which it's skill all the way, *Speedball 2* sometimes gets frustrating, especially when you're playing against the computer and you can't understand why you're getting thrashed! When you play against a friend who has roughly the same level of expertise as you, it's a lot more fun. But even then, you'll often find that you'll give your opponent a huge thrashing one game and then receive the same treatment the very next.

THERE FOR THE TAKING...



These power-ups boost your stats (like in the gym, except these are free)



... These icons can have good and bad effects, like reversing your controls or speeding up the game

GOOD FOR A LAUGH

Speedball 2 is a high-speed bash and despite being annoying at times, it is still a right good laugh. And this is where the game's strength lies. If you're bored with *Madden*-alikes (or any game which requires a little thought for that matter), *Speedball 2* is a breath of fresh air. It's a real joy to be able to sit at it for half an hour, get all fired up, curse, swear and come out of it thoroughly exhausted and hating your best friend. If you suffer from stress at work, school, or home, have a bash at this and you'll feel a lot better. Don't, however, expect any real one-player fun in the long term.

® *Andy Dyer*

GET A GRIP!

D-pad: This enables you to select options on the management screens and move your players around during a match.

Ⓐ This button enables you to jump, throw low, thr...

Ⓑ ... Hang on, so does this one. That can't be ri...

Ⓒ ... Oh blimey, this is daft. This one does the same.

Yes, it's true. All three buttons carry out exactly the same function. But how can one single button do all the things on the right. Well, it all depends on where your blokey is when the button is pressed. Simple isn't it?

When the ball is in the air, get under it, press C and you'll jump to catch it

If the opposition is running away with the ball, do a sliding tackle on 'em

The highly versatile C button is also used to beat the opposition to a pulp

Tap the C button if you have the ball, and you'll throw the ball fast and low...

...Whereas if you press and hold C, you'll throw the ball high into the air

SPEEDBALL 2
BRUTAL DELUXE

PUBLISHER: Virgin
PRICE: Dunno yet
RELEASE: October
CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit
CONTACT: Virgin: 081 960 2255

One or two players. Best when opponent is of a similar standard

Games get more difficult as you progress through the season

Just one life, but you can get beaten up in stages

No battery back-up

The tournaments take you through several games

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 8

GAME SIZE 5

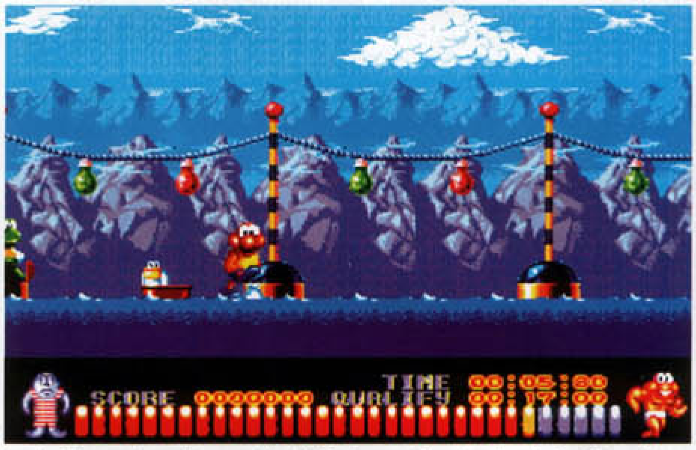
ADDICTION 8

Definitely best when two people are playing. It *can* get a bit frustrating but it's good aggressive fun

81 PERCENT

THE AQUATI

Paul Mellerick, superhero and fish, (eh?) well, whoever or *whatever* he is, reviews *The Aquatic Games – Starring James Pond and the Aquabats.* It's not the most intellectual of games, but everyone at MEGA had a good chuckle at the goofy characters



Looks like you've got your old pal F-fortesque Frog beaten, but will you be able to keep it up?

The Aquatic Games are not just any multi-event sports championships. They star James Pond, intrepid underwater superhero and fish, and they can be played in the comfort of your own bedroom.

There are eight sub-aqua sporting events in total. All have a vaguely marine-linked theme, all are guaranteed to wear your fingers down to the bone – there's a lot of button bashing involved, and all will give you a bit of a giggle.

THE EIGHT EVENTS

The 100 Metre Splash is the first event. It's a two-creature race in which James (under your control) has to race against his long-time buddy F-fortesque Frog. To get a bronze medal you have to complete the course in under seventeen seconds. Obviously, a bit more is expected from you for the more valuable medals: do it in less than sixteen seconds for a silver and under fifteen for a gold. You'll need nerves of steel and finger tips to match to qualify for this one.

Next up is **Kipper Watching** (watching seals kipping, get it?). You are Ceceelia, and you have to protect a group of sleeping seals from the bouncing beach balls which are threatening to disrupt their slumber. Nut the balls away before they hit the snoring seals.

The Aquatics version of the **Hop, Skip and Jump** adds a new dimension to the Olympic event. Run up to the mark by waggling the joypad rapidly, hop along a little, then, when a skipping rope appears, do a bit of skipping. Finish off the event with the biggest leap you can muster.

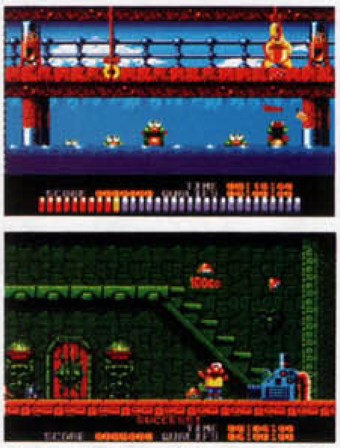
Bouncy Castle is a gymnastic event in which you have to bounce up and down on a couple of giant sponges, performing all sorts of somersaults and twists in a limited amount of time. There are six manoeuvres, each of which has to be done a total of six times within a four-minute limit before you can qualify.

In **Feeding Time** you have to satisfy the appetites of the little fish which peep up above the water-line. Feed them sweets from the machines at either side of the screen, and the fish will disappear beneath the waves again. If you're not generous enough with the sweets, the fish could end up on the plates of the unseen fishermen, who lure them with tempting bait (which looks very much like a certain mint with a hole).

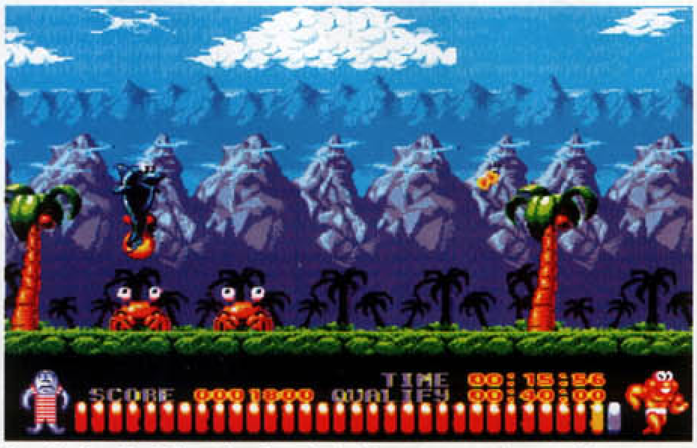
Probably the best event in terms of gameplay is **Shell Shooting.** Two machines at either side of the playing area spit out limpets. Leap onto the edges of the limpet shells to flip them into the air, catch them in a tub and then pop balloons with them. Make sure that they don't knock you over, or you get stunned and therefore waste valuable time incapacitated.

Tour de Grass features a shark on a unicycle – all this stuff is starting to sound a bit commonplaice (sorry, that's commonplace) really, isn't it? You pedal along (by "cycling" the directional controls on the joypad) and jump over crabs in an attempt

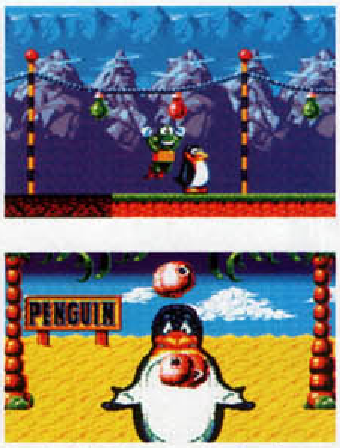
A good gas, if a bit kippery at times



Once you've tipped the limpet, make sure you catch it

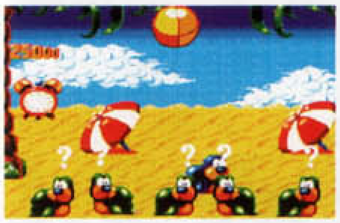


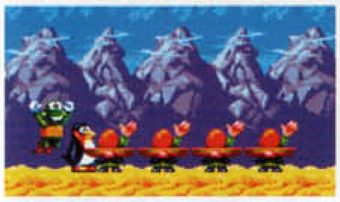
Here he is... Mark the unicycling shark. Keep your speed up and jump over the surprised-looking crabs



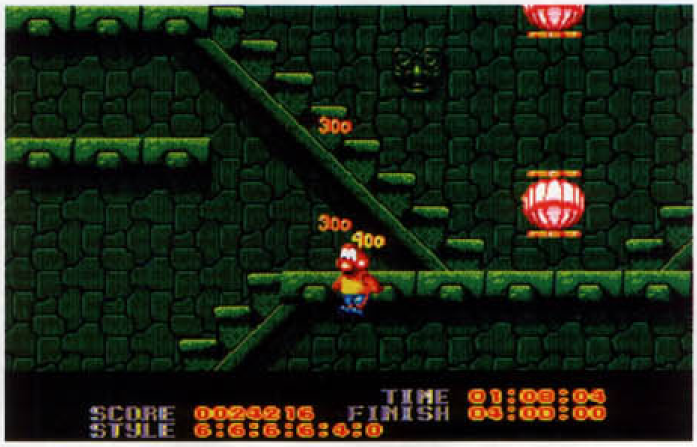
Excel at the leap frog (top) and you could become a juggling penguin

C GAMES





Blinking seals and waving Mexicans – what more could you wish for?



From the expression on his face, it is evident that James Pond likes bouncing on sponges. Paul's expression is not dissimilar when he plays this, his fave, event

to complete the course in record time.

The final event, **Leap Frog**, would be called hurdles in the real world of athletics because the event involves running along and jumping over obstacles, in this case eels in the sand.

If you score highly enough in one of the main events, you are (somewhat poorly) recompensed with the bonus events. First up is a rather uncomfortable looking juggling penguin followed by the more athletic long-jumping frog.

THE BEST STRATEGY

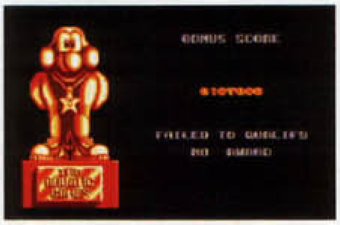
Your initial entrance to the Aquatic Games is through the main menu screen, but if you fail to qualify for any one event, you'll go straight back to the beginning. Until you've sussed the gameplay, you're best advised to take one of the practice options. These allow you to find your fins with three scales of difficulty (uhum) by letting you choose an individual event, which you can persevere with until you are of a superior aquatic standard. You may find winning medals left, right and centre altogether the most satisfying experience of your life, but take my word for it when I tell you that the game truly excels when you take on your mates as well. You can play in pairs or in groups of three or four, each player taking it in turn to compete in each event. (Simultaneous play is not possible, so there is no immediate competitiveness with your chums. This doesn't mean, however, that you can't still thrash the pants off them – what with all the practice you'll have put in!)

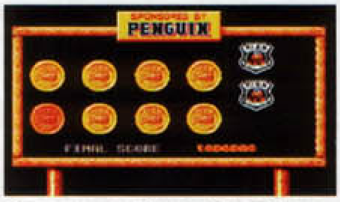
AND, TO CONCLUDE...

The game is extremely slick, and technically it has been very well programmed. It has brilliantly attractive graphics and shows a great deal of humour – it's a lot more interesting than looking at a tank of tropical fish anyway. However, suspicions have to be cast on the game's longevity. It's a joypad-prodding sports sim, and, as such, much of the gameplay involves little more skill than being able to press buttons rapidly to increase speed. The more interesting events are marred by the amount of time you have to play them – they last too long and there's little variation.

The appeal of James Pond and his mates is hard to resist but, unless you're a die-hard button-basher, you'd be better off waiting for the arrival of *James Pond III – Splash Gordon*, which will see James returning to his more familiar platform-style game. Shame really.

® *Paul Mellerick*

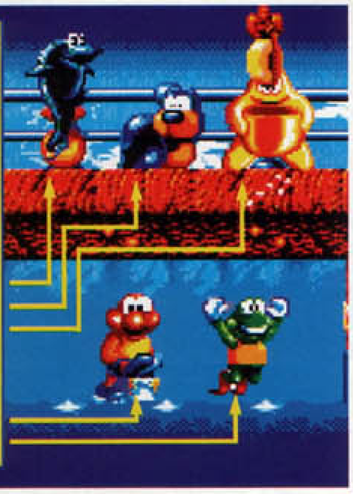


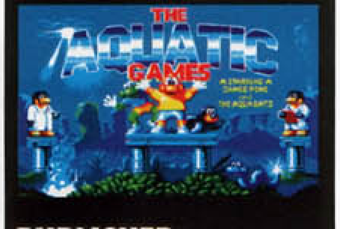


Game over, and time to take pride, or not, in the number of golds you've won

GET A GRIP!

EACH CHARACTER'S CONTROLS:
Shark – D-pad clockwise; A, B or C to jump
Seal – Left; Right; A or C to turbo run; B to jump
Starfish – Left; Right; A, B or C to fill up and drop
James Pond – 100 m: A & B to run; C to jump. Bouncy Castle: A to twist; B to jump; C & Left to spin backwards; C & Right to spin forwards. Shell Shooting: B to jump; C to catch/throw shell
Frog – A & B to run; C to jump





PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: August '92

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

Up to four players can take part for four times the fun

In effect the three medals act as three skill levels to aim for

Only one "life" when playing solo, go all the way with multi-play

You can't save your record-breaking times on this one

Eight events, plus a couple of extras... if you're good enough

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 5

GAME SIZE 6

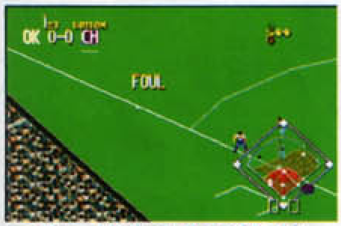
ADDICTION 6

Great graphics and a brilliant sense of humour prevail throughout the game, but there's little to it in the way of gameplay. You're unlikely to plug in this box of fish and chips too frequently!

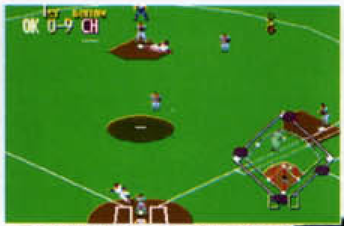
75 PERCENT

SPORTS TALK BASEBALL

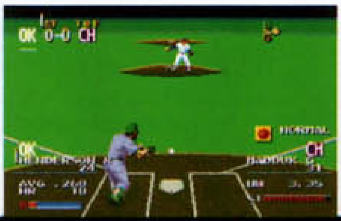
Can you swing a bat, throw a ball, and catch a hard ball without screaming "Ouch, ooyah, that bloody hurt!"? Andy Dyer can't, but then he does cut a dash at the controls of a good baseball cart



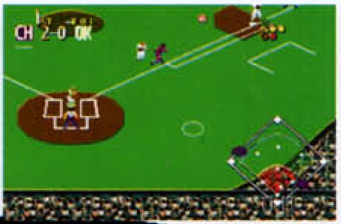
① If you hit the ball outside this baseline (or the right hand one), it's a foul, and a run can't be made



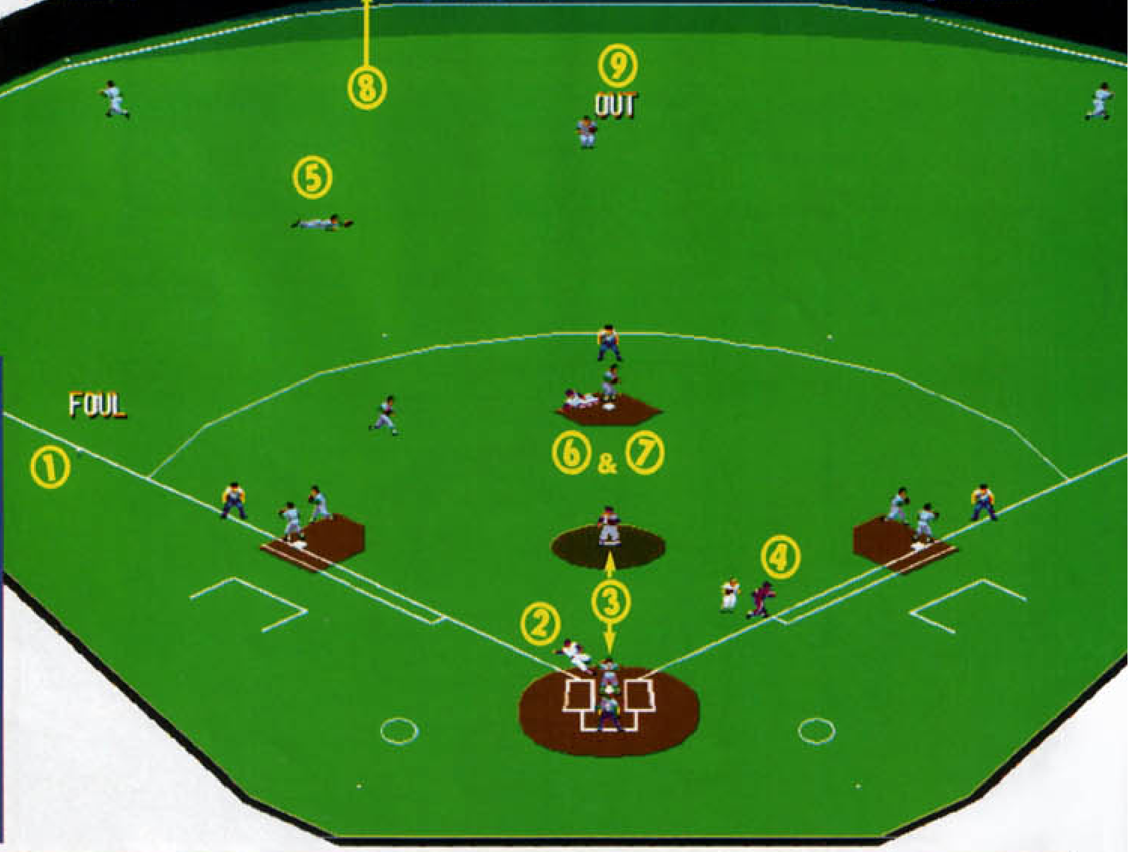
② The slide enables you to reach a base very quickly. It warms up your butt too



③ The batter can move around a bit in order to make a better swing at the pitched ball



④ If a nearby fielder can get hold of the ball, he can get the batter out by touching him with it



GET A GRIP!

To move around the pitch, press the arrows in the direction you want to travel. The pad is also used to shuffle the batter around on the base, and it also moves the pitcher left and right

Ⓐ Naff all

Ⓑ Fields the ball to bases

Ⓒ Controls the batter's swing and the pitcher's, er, well, pitch

The fun you can have with a length of wood, a couple of balls and a large leather glove is amazing. But did you know that you can also use these components to play a rather exciting game called baseball?

The Americans picked up on this idea and, apparently, the game is now pretty big business over there. So much so, that Mega Drive owners in good old Blighty can now choose from four different baseball carts.

Sports Talk Baseball is the latest release and the only real difference between it and its predecessors is that it talks, and talks, and talks, and... well, talks. The amount of speech in this game is unreal, it chucks out more wibble than Ronnie Corbett when he's on a roll. Every move you make, every strike you take, every pitch you take (there's a song in there somewhere) is acknowledged by the little electronic commentator inside your Sega. There's no denying that, initially, this makes for a more exciting experience but once this novelty has worn off, you're left with a game that does little to improve upon a tried and tested baseball game formula.

One good reason why you should choose this over the other baseball carts on the market is that it's a bit easier to control (you can practically learn the game without even looking at the manual). Another (yes, there is another) is that all the players' statistics represent exactly those of the real teams in the 1991 MLBPA league. This last detail may not be very interesting to anyone who's not a real fan of the game, but sometimes it's this sort of extra attention to detail that makes a game more interesting.

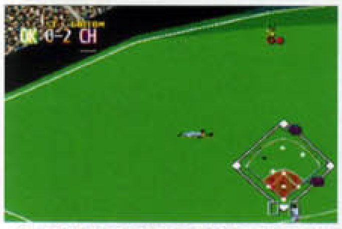
If you've been gagging to get your hands on a baseball cart, *Sports Talk Baseball* is possibly the one to go for. But if you're not a fan of the real life game, or you have already tired of the idea, you won't find enough here, over and above what's already been done, to make it a worthwhile purchase. A great baseball game, but at the end of the day it is *just* a baseball game.

Andy Dyer

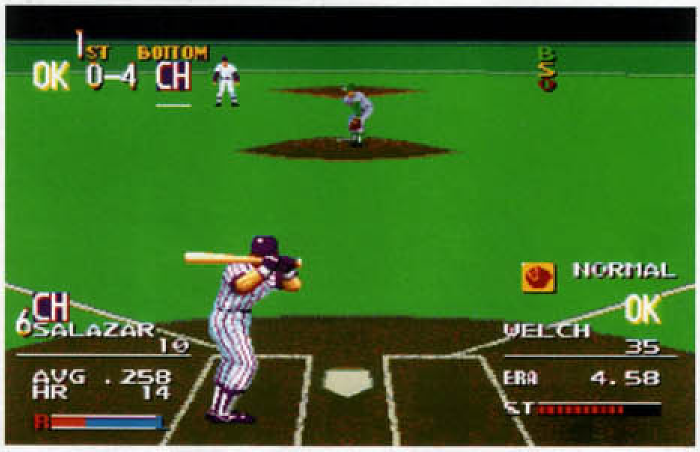
More hot air than Ronnie Corbett

THEN AGAIN...

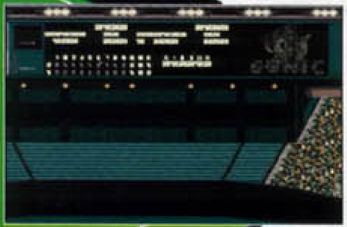
If you liked *Super League* or *Hardball*, you'll like this. They're all the bloody same, aren't they?



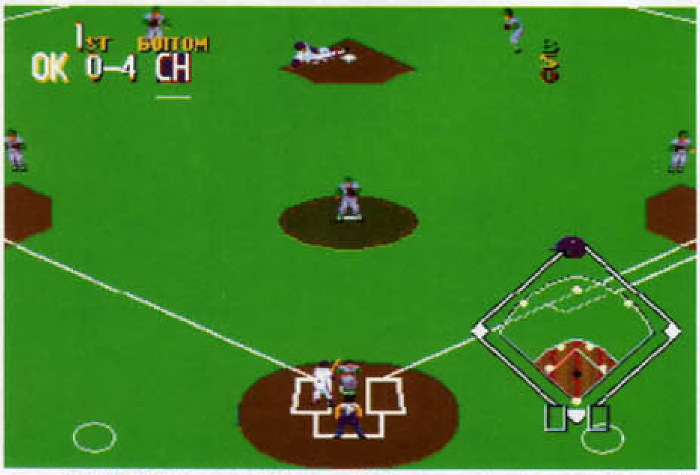
⑤ This bloke's got a bit confused and dived for a small earthworm instead of for the ball which is happily sailing past him



⑥ Everything was in readiness on the baseball field when suddenly, and without warning, Daniel "Porky" McCurley made a dash from second base to steal third. He gets up to a blistering two miles per hour, despite being on a daily diet of two roast boars, three dozen banana-boat surprises, five kilos of sherbet dip, four barrels of beer, and a gross of pickled onions...

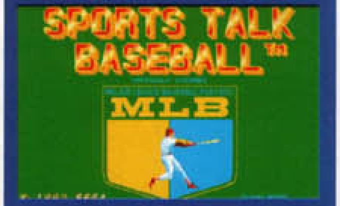


⑧ Hit the ball out of the stadium and you get a home-run. Look, this one's been scored by none other than "Baby" Sonic



⑦ ... but the fielders are a bit too quick for our porky pal and he's forced to slide back to base leaving an unsightly deep furrow in the previously immaculate turf

⑨ If you hit the ball too high, you're likely to get caught out like the poor loser here



PUBLISHER: Sega USA
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE: August '92
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Console Concepts
0782 712759

One to six players. More people can play in a mini league

No skill level as such. But as you progress, the games get tougher

Lives! Don't be so daft. This is a baseball game

You can save after every three games in the Pennant tournament

No levels here. It's just one long haul through the season

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	9
GAMEPLAY	7
GAME SIZE	5
ADDICTION	7

Apart from the smart speech, you've seen it all before. It's good for first-time baseball game players though

74 PERCENT

TEAM USA BASKETBALL

Did you watch the Olympics? Did you see the "Dream Team" win the gold medal? Reckon you could do the same? Well Paul Mellerick does. And here he comes...

The Olympics have been and gone, and no one was surprised when the American "Dream Team" walked off with the gold medal. Well, now, thanks to EASN, you can relive the tension and the pressure of top-flight international basketball on your Mega Drive.

The game is basically a tarted up version of *Bulls vs Lakers*, except that instead of being limited to professional basketball teams, *Team USA Basketball* includes all the teams which took part in the Olympics. Just select "Tournament" from the main menu and then choose your team from the 14 available.

Instead of the usual knockout championships that you find in other sport sims, the teams are split into two groups. A match is played between one team from each group to decide who goes further and so on. You must finish fourth or higher in your group to qualify for the final knock-out stage, where only three victories stand between you and the gold medal.

> **The animation is as close to real life as you're likely to get**

The graphics are good and the smooth (not to mention incredibly realistic) animation makes for a very good-looking game. The sound effects are rather disappointing – the odd crowd cheer and bit of speech do little to add to the overall atmosphere of the game. The control system is very well laid out, however, and after a few plays using it becomes very instinctive. The only bummer about *Team USA Basketball* is that the game's just too easy.

If you choose America as your team, you'll win the gold medal in next to no time and once you've got to grips with the controls and the player's movements, you should be able to reach gold status even by using a team like Angola.

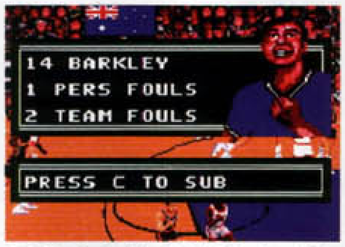
Basketball is not just about winning against the computer, however, and as you'd expect, the game includes a two-player option. Not only that, but EASN have gone one further and added a two-player co-operative mode, which allows you both to play one-on-one against the computer throughout the whole of the tournament and, if you're both good enough, both of your teams can win.

A good selection of options is also available, with three difficulty levels, a very simple password system and even a bonus "All-World" team just for a bit of variety.

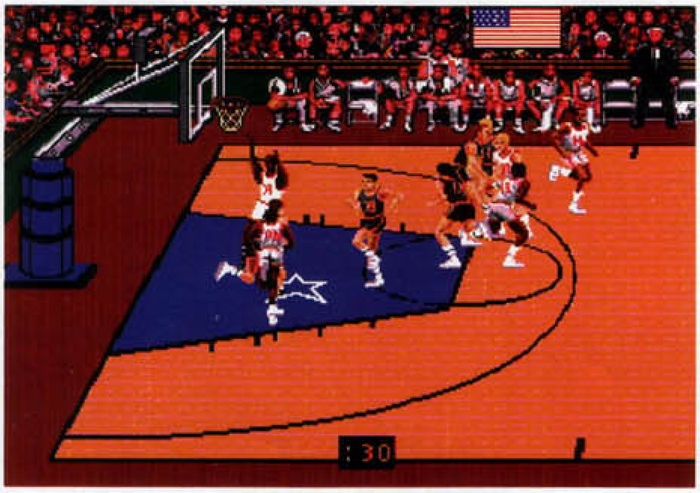
EASN games are full of realistic touches, which makes playing them more fun. Once boredom has set in as a result of the simplicity of the game, however, the realism and all the gold medals in the world are small compensation for *Team USA Basketball*'s lack of challenge.

If you've got a buddy who's as big a basketball fan as you are (assuming you are of course), then this game is definitely the most realistic of a very samey bunch of ball-bouncing games. But if you haven't got any such friends, you'd be better off buying something totally amazing like *John Madden Football*.

● ***Paul Mellerick***



OK, that's Barkley's first foul and the second for the team. Keep an eye on him and get ready to pull him off



"... oh I say, that's a fantastic lay-up from Michael Jordan, and the "Dream Team" goes ahead 120:6 against Angola. But it's early days yet. Stay tuned to this station for live second half coverage... if you like, er, it's up to you."

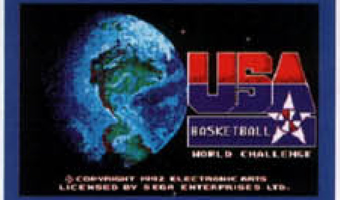
GET A GRIP!

D-pad – Moves your players around

Ⓐ Shoots, or performs a special move

Ⓑ Passes the ball to the highlighted player

Ⓒ Performs a jump shot


USA
BASKETBALL
WORLD CHALLENGE
© COPYRIGHT 1992 ELECTRONIC ARTS
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES LTD.

PUBLISHER: EASN

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: December '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA: 0753 549442

One or two players

Three levels of skill

Lives – don't be silly

Password awarded after each game in tournament mode

Win nine matches to get the gold medal

GRAPHICS 8
●●●●●●●●○○

SOUND 5
●●●●●○○○○○

GAMEPLAY 8
●●●●●●●●○○

GAME SIZE 4
●●●●○○○○○○

ADDICTION 6
●●●●●●○○○○

It's a decent basketball sim, but unless you can find someone to play it with, it's too easy

72 PERCENT

SMASH TV

So long, Brookside. The most violent, destructive, richest and controversial TV game show is here. Paul Mellerick's only complaint is that it's completely crap, really

Anybody who doesn't already know what *Smash TV* is, must have been doing serious hibernation over the last couple of years. Because if you're a regular arcade goer, then you really should have been itching to get this game on your Mega Drive for some time now – if for no other reason than to prove just how good the Mega Drive actually is at converting arcade coin-ops.

But wait a sec. Doesn't *Smash TV* have an extremely awkward control system? How do they manage to convert it? Well read on, as they say, and all will be revealed.

Armed with only a meagre rifle (and what you can pick up in power-ups) you and a mate must enter the demonic, fantasy TV world of *Smash TV* and kill everything that moves in three levels of TV studios. Sounds exciting? Well it should have been.

This is possibly the worst coin-op conversion we've ever seen. Kicking boots ready? Let's go.

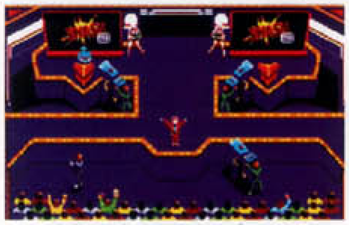
First stop, graphics: Fair do's. The backdrops are OK, but when the sprites waddle on you'll just fall about laughing. The clubbers look extremely overweight and appear to be attacking you with a leg of pork instead of a wooden club. Bizarre. It gets worse.

Second up: Let's talk about gameplay. MEGA can reveal that *Smash TV* plays as well as a runaway piano would handle a chicane. OK, so it was always going to be difficult to convert the intricate arcade control system but that's no excuse – if you're not up to a job, don't bother.

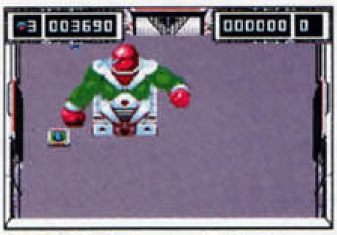
What's next? Ah yes: Dodgy collision detection. Sprites can hit you without touching you (if you see what I mean) yet you (the player) need to get bull's-eye every time. Brill-a-roony. Not.

Anybody who loved the coin-op, or even fancies having a blast of *Smash TV*, should steer well clear of this. This is most definitely one of the worst coin-op conversions in Mega Drive history.

Paul Mellerick.



The studio doors are open and it's time to get dirty. Don't take orders, just kill everything in sight



Mutoid Man's here, and it takes a bloody long time to kill him. Work on the arms first, then the head

PUBLISHER: Flying Edge

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: November '92

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Acclaim: 0962 877788

One, or two simultaneous players

SKILL! Nope, it's tough enough anyway

You start with seven lives but only have one continue

NO! No passwords or battery back-up

Three big levels split into loadsa sections

MEGA SAYS:
We've found it! The worst coin-op conversion in Mega Drive history!

37 PERCENT

DODGEBALL

Ball control has never really been Amanda Cook's strong point. But at least she's never *killed* anyone...

This isn't exactly the easiest game to learn (and a hefty Japanese manual doesn't help much either), but after many hours of playing we finally managed to crack it.

Volleyball meets *Speedball* as two seven-on-seven teams try to beat the living daylights out of each other with a medicine ball. Strange, the Japanese.

Each of your players has a health rating, which gets lower when ball meets body. Four players take to the court for each team, and their highly fragile state of health is displayed at the side of the screen.

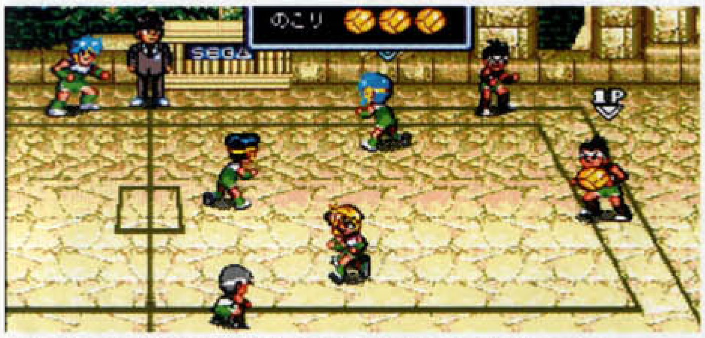
When a player is knocked out, he's stretchered off the pitch and replaced by somebody else. Get down to less than four players, and when somebody croaks they won't be replaced. Game over is when all your men are lost.

Controlling the game is what really grabs you. You only control one player at a time but you can pass the ball safely between team members (you still have to catch it though) swapping control to whoever gets the ball. When you feel the time is right, power the ball at an opponent and watch him fly. Jumping serves two functions: it either gives you more momentum in your throw or lets you dodge from an incoming sphere of death. If you try to move out of the court with the ball, you'll automatically drop it and give away possession. Different throws are accessed through differently timed presses of the fire button, and there's lots to discover.

The graphics aren't exactly ground-breaking but the character sprites on screen are nicely detailed and well-animated in a very cartoony way. The colours are nice and cheerful and they don't clash with the ball, so you can always see it coming. Soundwise, though, the game lets itself down, with an annoying little tune that grates away throughout the match.

With a league option, including up to six players, a one-on-one against the computer or a mate, and options galore, you won't get bored of this game in a hurry. Although not particularly outstanding, this is a novel sports game that won't appeal to everyone but definitely breaks the mould of serious sport sims, and at the same time let's you have a bit of fun.

Amanda Cook



Quick, throw it at that guy with his back turned. Easy kill, teehee

PUBLISHER: Sega Japan Import

PRICE: £35.00

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames: 0533 516861

Up to six players can take part in the league

SKILL! Some teams are good, some aren't

You start with seven points/players each match

The battery back-up saves your league position automatically

Play the computer, your mate, or six mates

MEGA SAYS:
Dodgeball is great fun to play and OK to look at. If you play regularly with up to six mates, then give it a try.

73 PERCENT

The Future Entertainment Show

Quids in

Get smart. Getting on for 100,000 people are expected to attend the **Future Entertainment Show.** You know what that means: Queue City. So avoid all the foot-shuffling, hanging-around-for-ages start to the Show by booking your tickets early. And you'll even **save money**! Bit of a barg, really. Do it now, otherwise you'll only forget and then regret it later when you're really cold and – *(Snip! - Ed)*

YES I would like to have my tickets early, avoid all the queues and save £1.05 on every ticket, please.
Adults £5.95, Under 14s £3.95.

Call the credit card hotline on
051-356 5085
or fill out the coupon on the right!

Mega is doing all this and a ridiculous amount more at the Future Entertainment Show.

You're not the sort of character to even *think* of missing out, are you?

What's what

When? November 5-8, 9.30am-5pm (4pm Sunday)
Where? Earls Court, heart of London
What? Sega, Nintendo, Amiga, PC, ST games
How much? £7 adults, £5 Under 14s (but see Quids In bit)
Why? Just why not?

Tickets

M/10

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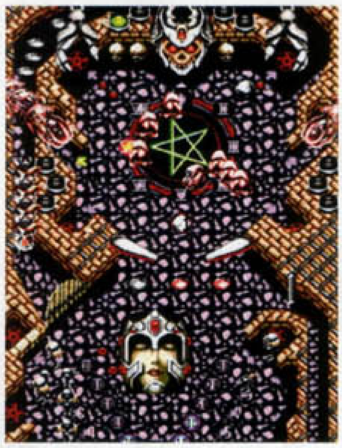
- Get seen & heard on TV broadcasts & live radio!
- Win competitions &, er, "do" virtual reality!
- Meet Neil West and his burning team!

It's the event of a lifetime!

DRAGON'S FURY

Cue Andy Dyer – Errr... let's see, "a fast moving ga..." no, no good. "A graphical mast..." no, that's not right either. Oh balls. (That'll do! – Ed)



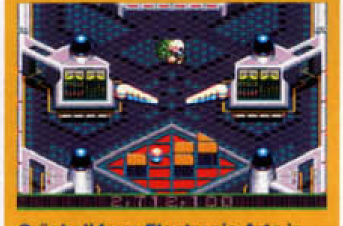
Oi! Wake up you daft cow. You're about to be "crowned" by a large chrome ball. Oh forget it

Yes indeed, yesiree, yip, it's pinball all right. A good ol' pinball game. Pinny, pinny pinball. Pinnety pin, pin, pin. Mmm… oh God. What the hell can I say about pinball that hasn't already been said a million times over?

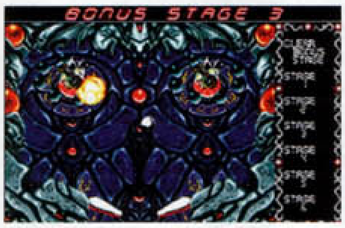
I mean, *really*? I could go into lengthy descriptions of the added bonus games featured in this cart, or explain why it's such good fun, but that would be about as interesting as a romantic dinner with a ratchet screwdriver. All that needs to be said is that *Dragon's Fury* is graphically gorgeous, the movement is smooth as silk and it's absolutely crammed with neat ideas and added features that simply wouldn't be possible on a real table. What's more, it's a bloody hoot to play. Other than that, your best bet is to take a good hard look at the screenshots. Then, if you're even remotely interested in pinball games, go out and buy it.

® *Andy Dyer*

THEN AGAIN...



Crüeball from Electronic Arts is due for review next month. If pinball's your bag, you'd better wait until next month to check out which one is the real wizard



Just one of the six tilt-mungous bonus rounds in *Dragon's Fury*

PUBLISHER: Tengen

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Domark: 081 780 2222

One or two. No head-to-head. Players play alternately

SKILL! One, but you can change the speed of the ball

You get three balls, but you can pick up more as you play

Yes, there's a password system

No, it's simply a case of getting as many points as you can

MEGA SAYS:
This is great. Even if you hate pinball, there's a chance that this may change your mind. On the other hand, if you even slightly enjoy the odd silver ball-bashing session, this is an absolute must!

83 PERCENT

THE MAGNIFICENT(?) SEVEN

Sega's new range of back-catalogue games cost only £19.99 each. But MEGA wonders if they're worth it...

LAST BATTLE

I suppose we'd better start with the bottom of the pile and let's face it, you can't really get much lower than this. *Last Battle* was one of the first ever left-to-right, scrolling beat-'em-up UK releases, but it's all been done 100 times better 100 times before.
MEGA says: The bottom line is that this game is NOT half as good as your average full-priced cart. There's nothing more to be said really, except that it's small wonder that *Last Battle* has been awarded the MEGA accolade of being the second worst game of all time. Take a look at page 85. **4%**

SUPER HANG-ON

Now this is more like it. So "like it", in fact, that *Super Hang-On* is number 48 in our definitive Top 100. Instead of just converting the coin-op straight over to the MD, Sega took time out to include an "original mode". This is basically a road race session in which you race to win money to improve your bike – excellent stuff that gives a well-needed shot in the arm to the game's life expectancy.
MEGA says: A coin-op conversion, with that little bit extra. Good graphics, slick playability and 20 quid less than the rest. At the money, a barg. **74%**

SUPER THUNDERBLADE

When first released in the UK, the Mega Drive had to sell the idea of having an arcade machine in your own home.
MEGA says: Well, with *Super Thunderblade* around it's a wonder that Sega sold *anything*. Repetitive gameplay, a terrible 3D graphic effect, dodgy controls, bland graphics and awful sound, make this one of the worst ever Mega Drive games. **18%**

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE

The hero of the Master System moves on to the Mega Drive and you'd never know he's been away (ie the graphics are crap).

Alex must travel around the planet finding money hidden in treasure chests to take part in Janken matches (!?). Win one and you'll be given a gift that will help you on your quest to find your lost Dad.

Alex Kidd is a big hit on the MS but that's because they are *used* to uncontrollable, ugly-looking platform games. (OK, OK, some of them are quite good. If you're after more info on Master System games then we suggest you read Sega Power). But us Mega Drive owners expect something a bit more polished.
MEGA says: Unfortunately, we don't get it from Mr Kidd – he's a git. **36%**

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

Hooray! Another chart-topper in MEGA's Ten Worst Games of all time – see page 85 (we *do* like a good bitch). Viewed from overhead with large sprites, *World Cup Italia '90* starts off OK: the game doesn't look too bad, and including a full World Cup tournament is a very good idea. But from here on in it's all downhill. "Completely uncontrollable" are the two words which spring to mind. And the words that quickly follow those two, well – we're not allowed to print them.
MEGA says: With nob sound, incredibly easy computer opponents and zilcho two-player appeal, this one is destined for a life on the shelf next to your Noddy pants. **20%**

SPACE HARRIER 2

It's coin-op time again but this time it's a sequel. *Space Harrier* was one of the first coin-ops to have a hydraulic chair to throw you about the place and make you throw.

Take away the chair and you're left with a calmer stomach but a severely edited game. You must still run through each of the 12 stages armed only with your trusty laser cannon, dispatching all sorts of creatures as you go until you inevitably run into (literally) the end-of-level baddie, but...
MEGA says: ...a lot is lost. The 3D effect is still quite good and the bad guys come in all sorts of weird guises. This really isn't a bad game, but anyone other than die-hard *Space Harrier* fans will get bored. Try it out and remember – it's only 20 quid. **55%**

ZANY GOLF

Crazy Golf on the Mega Drive. I mean, *seriously*? What the hell were Electronic Arts (the programming team behind this farcical dollop of what all games *shouldn't* be) playing at? The graphics are awful, the gameplay stinks, the ball moves about as smoothly as a three-legged dog over hurdles and the whole sad, shambling, mockery of a video game limps along at its own nauseating pace until either: a) you die of boredom; or b) you discover just how far it's possible to lob a cart when truly motivated.
MEGA says: Unadulterated, 100% pure, genuine article… (Snip! – Ed) **11%**

News of more cut-price releases in an issue of MEGA coming soon...

Are you Britain's best games player?

BEAT THE REST AND WIN THOUSANDS OF £££s!

(There's £10,000 in it for you if you are...)

Yes, £10,000! That's the prize for the winner of the National Computer Games Championships, and entry is absolutely free. All you have to do is turn up to one of the Virgin Games Centres where heats are being held and show us what you're made of!

To start with you have a choice of playing on the Mega Drive, Super NES or Amiga, but if you get through the first stage then you'll have to really show off your skills by playing several games on different machines.

If you get top marks in the special gamers' challenge you could make it to the finals at the Future Entertainment Show in November and face a play-off on the video wall with the TV cameras watching! And the winner will walk off with £10,000 in cash.

If you think you're up to the challenge, look up your nearest entry point below, and see if you are as good as you think you are...

THE PRIZES!

The winners of each heat will go forward to a regional final the same week. The winner of each regional final will get an **Amiga,** a **Mega Drive** and a **Super NES,** plus copies of the games which will be used in the finals so they can get ready in style. In the grand final itself, the runner up will get **£4,000** while the winner will go home an incredible **£10,000** richer!

FREE ENTRY!

HOW TO ENTER

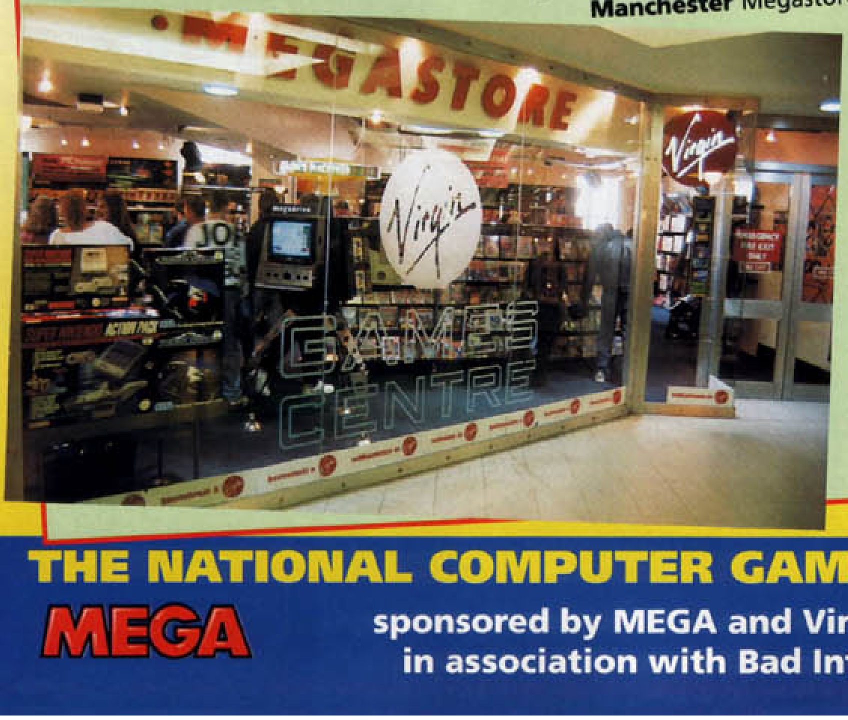
Just turn up, ready to give of your best, at one of these heats being held all over the country:

12th, 13th, 14th, 15th October

Glasgow Union Street Megastore
Falkirk Games Centre
East Kilbride Games Centre

19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd October

Stockport Game Centre
Manchester Megastore



26th, 27th, 28th, 29th October

Bromley Game Centre
Croydon Game Centre
Guildford Game Centre
Ilford Game Centre
Kingston Game Centre
London Game Centre, 100 Oxford Street
Birmingham Megastore
Bristol Game Centre
Cardiff Megastore
Newcastle Megastore
Gateshead Game Centre

There you'll have to try out a special timed challenge on Zool, Robocop 3 or Aquatics. Regional finals will be held on the Friday of each week in a local Megastore, and the winners of the regional finals will go to the grand final in Earls Court on November 7th and 8th.

THE NATIONAL COMPUTER GAMES CHAMPIONSHIPS

MEGA

sponsored by MEGA and Virgin Retail in association with Bad Influence!

Virgin

MEGA PLAY

So, you're not as good at some Mega Drive games as you'd like to be, huh? Well, we're here to make you feel, and look, a tad better with handy tips, cheats... the lot

TIPS DIRECTORY

Air Diver 63
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Alisia Dragoon 64
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Bonanza Bros 63
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Super Fantasy Zone 63
Super Hang-On 63
Taz-Mania ..... 63 and 73
Test Drive II 64
Trampoline Terror 63
Twin Cobra 62
Wani Wani World 64
Zoom 63

WIN A GAME GEAR!

Well, there we go... we've shown you ours, so it seems only fair that you show us yours. And there's a Game Gear for the person who sends in the best tip each month! So, don't waste a moment. Put your tip (or indeed, tips) down in writing to MEGA PLAY, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

PIT-FIGHTER

Oof! Urgh! Argh! Get off my head, will ya? I *am* trying to get up, you know

When you get to round eight, pause the game and plug in the second joypad. Press start and you'll get three extra lives.

THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Go to the options' screen and select 00 shurikens. Wait for a bit (about 40 seconds) and the two 0s will join together to make an infinity symbol. Now you'll have 999 shurikens, but the number won't go down. On level 4-2, fire at the base of the conveyor belt and a special Musashi symbol will appear. Collect it, and you'll get two lives. Die straight away, and keep doing this to accrue lives for as long as you like.

TWIN COBRA

Pause the game and press Up, Down, Right and Left. Press and hold down A and unpause. You'll now have a fully powered ship. Also, when the helicopter lands on the title screen, press Up, Down, Right and Left and then press Start. You can now select your level.

DARWIN 4081

Go to the options' screen and select sound test tune no. 32. Then press A and the stage you want to start on, ie press A twice for stage one, three times for stage two, four times for stage three, etc.

STREETS OF RAGE

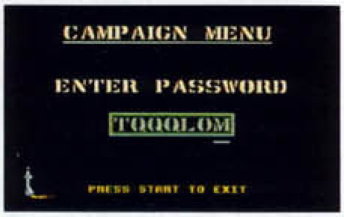
Definitely the best beat-'em-up money can buy and now, with this cheat, even easier to finish. Couldn't you just go for Blaze too?

When you're nearly dead, pause the game and plug into the second joypad slot. Press Start and play as player two, letting player one die.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Drop a coin down the well to receive an extra life.

DESERT STRIKE



CAMPAIGN MENU

ENTER PASSWORD

TQQQLOM

PRESS START TO EXIT

There's nothing like flying around the desert blowing up some soldiers, and, if you're feeling really nasty, you can kill some civilians too

Do you fancy having five lives instead of three? Well, enter your password as TQQQLOM and press Start, then enter your real code and off you go: level 2 – KQJRJTY, level 3 – OLOLAHV, level 4 – PTKEFTG.

KLAX

KLAX
GAME OPTIONS

So, you fancy a night on the tiles? Then this is the game for you. And now you can play it on the easy level too

Press C ten times on the options' screen for an easy level option.

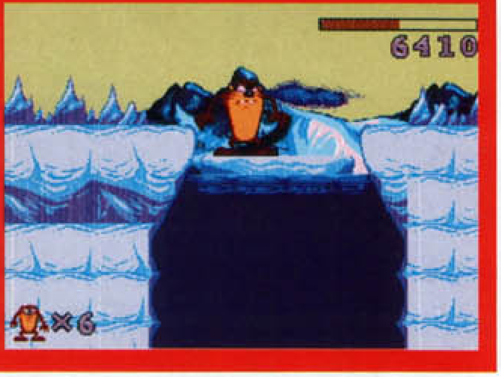
KID CHAMELEO

Special points – Finish each level in a certain way and you'll get bonus points. Finish a level without getting hit and you'll get 5,000 points; finish a level without picking up any helmets and you'll get 5,000 points; and finish the level with a set time-limit and you'll get 10,000 points.

Special Warp – Follow the sequence of events (right) and you'll warp to stage three, Black Peril.

TAZ-MANIA

On the arctic level stay on the last ice block, hold Down, and then press C to enter a secret room full of goodies.



Trust me okay, just jump down off this block. Go on, you only live once

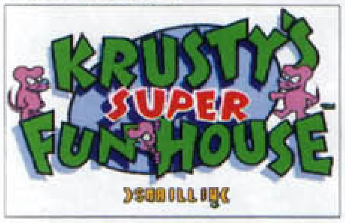
SUPER HANG-ON

Press A and Start on the title screen for a hidden options' menu.

SUPER FANTASY ZONE

Press Up and Down repeatedly at least 50 times. Start, and then go into the shop. You should be able to buy lives at $1,000.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE


KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

And you thought that I'd use this space for some cheap joke about something krusty. Wrong!

Here are all the passwords you'll need if you get stuck on a level: level 2 – WHOAMAMA, level 3 – FLANDERS, level 4 – BROCKMAN and level 5 – SIDESHOW. There's also a special password which will open every level and which will give you infinite lives so that you only have to complete level 5. Enter SMAILLIW and away you go.

BONANZA BROS

Find a location with a rake in it and try to time it so that when you get hit by the rake, you also get hit by a bullet. You're now invincible until you get your treasure.

BULLS VS LAKERS

PLAY-OFF SCHEDULE
0-4
4-1
0-0
PRESS START TO EXIT

Fancy taking on "Air" Jordan then, do you? Well he's crap, he is. My mum is better than him. So there

Enter password JXWP6BBQ and you'll be world champs with the Chicago Bulls. Enter CX0CGBB4 and you'll be in the final with the Bulls against the Blazers. Enter GJ0GBBBF and it's the Blazers vs Knicks. And finally, if you enter 0B0BLBBY, you'll be set up with the Blazers vs Hawks.

GAIARES

There are some cracking cheats for this one. Pause the game and hold down buttons A and C, then press Left. Unpause and you should be invincible, but this must be done at the start of each level.

Go to the config screen by holding down A, B and C then press Start. Set the sound test to 18, hold down A on the second controller and then exit the config. Press Start on the first controller to go to the stage select.

Enter the stage select (as above) and begin the game. Pause and hold Up pressing A twice. Resume the game and shoot Toz to power up your weapon.

TRAMPOLINE TERROR

Hold down A, B, C, Up and press Start. You'll get 99 credits and a level-select.

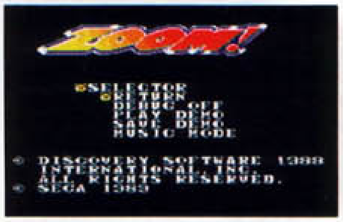
ROLLING THUNDER 2

Passwords, in order, from levels 2 to 11: MTLS, HFCG, RNSN, CPPP, LLBS, PIDT, NREF, MMMK, DNPD, PTCP.

AIR DIVER

Hold Start and press A, B, C, A, A, B, C, B, A and B. Now hold down Start until the game begins to become invincible. Repeat the above but hold down A to control the ace pilot, or repeat the above and hold down B to take on the level boss, or hold down C to face the big final boss.

ZOOM!

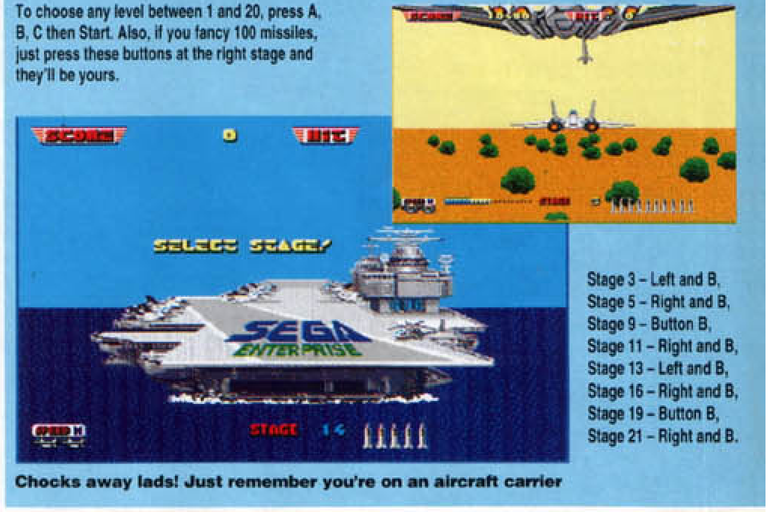

ZOOM!
SELECTOR
RETURN
DEBUG OFF
PLAY DEMO
SAVE DEMO
MUSIC MODE
DISCOVERY SOFTWARE 1989
INTERNATIONAL, INC.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
SEGA 1989

Why they hide all these options is beyond me. But there you go

Press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, A and B slowly on the player-selection screen. An options' menu will appear.

AFTERBURNER 2

To choose any level between 1 and 20, press A, B, C then Start. Also, if you fancy 100 missiles, just press these buttons at the right stage and they'll be yours.


SCORE
0
HIT
SELECT STAGE!
SEGA ENTERPRISE
STAGE 14

Stage 3 – Left and B,
Stage 5 – Right and B,
Stage 9 – Button B,
Stage 11 – Right and B,
Stage 13 – Left and B,
Stage 16 – Right and B,
Stage 19 – Button B,
Stage 21 – Right and B.

Chocks away lads! Just remember you're on an aircraft carrier

ALESTE

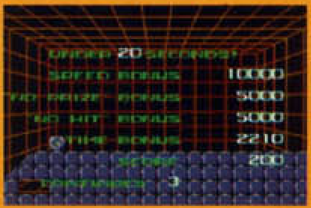
So, you fancy some extra continues, do you? Well, just pause the game for a moment and press Up, Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, C, C, B, A and then Start to get back into the game. You have now got 20 extra continues. There, that should make things a little bit easier.

SUPER FANTASY ZONE

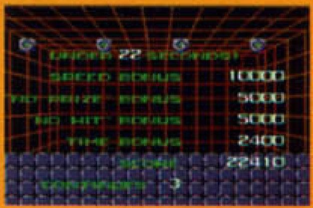
Can't get to the end? Would you like to be invincible? Then read on... When you're playing, press Start to pause. Plug in a controller in port two and hold down Down-Left and Start then press B. Do this and the word Pass appears on screen and tells you that the cheat has worked. Now press C to go to the next stage, B for infinite credits, ⊖

N

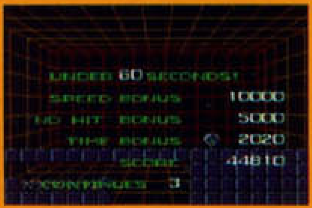
Follow these steps carefully and you can warp to your heart's content


UNDER 20 SECONDS!
SPEED BONUS 10000
NO PRIZE BONUS 5000
NO HIT BONUS 5000
TIME BONUS 2210
SCORE 200
CONTINUES 3

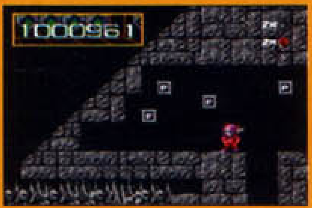
Finish Blue Lake Woods I in 20 seconds or less without getting hit and without picking up any prizes


UNDER 22 SECONDS!
SPEED BONUS 10000
NO PRIZE BONUS 5000
NO HIT BONUS 5000
TIME BONUS 2400
SCORE 22410
CONTINUES 3

Do the same in Blue Lake Woods II, but in 22 seconds or less


UNDER 60 SECONDS!
SPEED BONUS 10000
NO HIT BONUS 5000
TIME BONUS 2020
SCORE 44810
CONTINUES 3

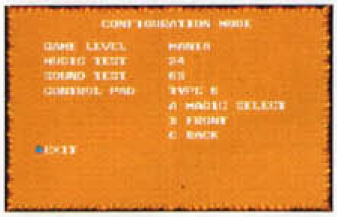
On to Highwater Pass I – Do this in 60 seconds or less without getting hit, but you can pick up prizes. Just make sure you finish with the rhino helmet on. Do Highwater Pass II without getting hit and without picking up any bonuses, take the teleporter and you'll be in Elsewhere



Find the cyclone helmet and then take the teleporter out to Under Skull Mountain I. About halfway through the level go into a room on the right-hand side. The four P blocks will give you 10,000 points each, giving you a total of more than 100,000. You'll now be warped to stage 3. Easy!

and B again to be invincible. Play the game, pause again, and press C to go to the boss, and A to get $999,999,999 in gold.

ELEMENTAL MASTER

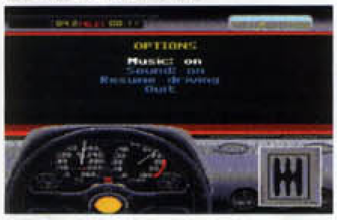


CONFIGURATION MODE
GAME LEVEL MANIA
MUSIC TEST 24
SOUND TEST 63
CONTROL PAD TYPE B
A MAGIC SELECT
B FRONT
C BACK
EXIT

"How do you do it, Holmes?" asked Watson. "It's elemental, me dear Watson," came the reply

By pressing A and Start simultaneously, you can find the hidden options' screen and then change all sorts of different things.

TEST DRIVE II



OPTIONS
Music: on
Sound: on
Resume driving
Quit

Get me behind the wheel of a Ferrari, and you won't see me for dust. It's a pity I drive a Maestro then, isn't it?

When driving, press and hold down A, B and C and you'll be taken to a secret options' menu, where you can change music, sound and anything else really.

WANI WANI WORLD (CROC WORLD)

Load up and press reset twice when the Sega word appears. Do this right, and you'll have 200 lives.

EL VIENTO

Pause the game and choose from one of the following: Up, Left, Right, Down and C gives you *big* magic; Up, Left, Right, Down and A moves the game in slow motion; and Up, Left, Right, Down and B enables you to skip to the next level.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

On the title screen press button A four times and then Up, Down, Left and Right, and you should hear a chime. Now press B and Start to become invincible. Or, on the title screen press A 16 times and then Up, Down, Left and Right, and you should again hear a chime. You can now do any of the following: Up, A and Start to go to level 2; Down, A and Start to go to level 3; Left, A and Start to go to level 4; Right, A and Start to go to level 5; and Right, Down, A and Start to go to the end boss.

JOHN MADDEN'S AMERICAN FOOTBALL '92

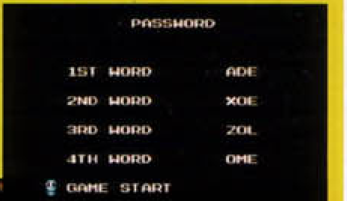
The best thing to do is to work out which players on your team are good and which aren't. For instance, choose Buffalo and you have a great running back (No. 34) and some capable wide receivers. So, using the instruction booklet, pick plays like, the HB Cross Right and the Up Hook – these (hopefully) stump the defence and enable you to move the ball up the field and score. Defence-wise, the best thing to do is choose a nickel set-up and move a linebacker just in front of the line of scrimmage, so that you can rush the quarterback.

FIGHTING MASTERS

Good game this, if you fancy a bit of mindless violence. But it's a real shame you can't play one on one with the same players, isn't it? Well actually you can. Select a two-player game and select your monster (or human for that matter) and press Up and A simultaneously. The same character will appear in a different colour and player two can also now select him/her/it(?).

SPLATTERHOUSE 2

Passwords : EDK NAI ZOL IDL, IDO GEM IAL LDL, ADE XOE ZOL OME, EFH VEI RAG ORD, ADE NAI WRA LKA, EFH XOE IAL LDL, EDK VEI IAL LDL.



PASSWORD
1ST WORD ADE
2ND WORD XOE
3RD WORD ZOL
4TH WORD OME
GAME START

Oi Jason, where are you going? Come back here

SCORE 24
LIFE
ITEM

MICKEY MOUSE: CASTLE OF ILLUSION

LEVEL 1 COMPLETED
HI-SCORE 00050000
SCORE 00020700
CLEAR BONUS 10000
TECHNICAL BONUS 2000
SECRET BONUS 24000

Now you'll like this game, not a little bit, but quite a lot. No that's not right, is it? Try again. Now you'll like this game... oh never mind

In need of an extra life? Well then, when you've finished a level, press Start as fast as you can while the game's adding up your score. Do this fast enough and you should hear the extra life "ring".

M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK

On the demo screen press B, B, C, B, C, C, C, B, C, B, B, C and then Start and you'll be given infinite ammo and invincibility. You can now go around blowing up everything and you can't get hit. Watch out though, you still need to pick up fuel to keep going.

SPACE HARRIER II

Thankfully, the re-release of this game now incorporates a handy level select to stop you getting bored. At the start, press and hold A, B and C and then (still holding them down) use Left or Right to select your starting level.

SD VALIS

This is a nice little Jap platform game and, by pressing Up, Down, Left, Right, A, B, Up, Down and Start on the title screen, you'll hear a chime, which means that you are now invincible. ⊛

ALISIA DRAGOON

Tough one this, but if you use this cheat, you shouldn't have too much trouble. It's a bit complex, though, so follow closely. When you turn the game on, wait until the Sega logo disappears and then hold down A until the words "Game Arts" have disappeared as well. Now hold down B until the word "Gainax" disappears and then hold down C until the words "Music Composed By..." disappear, then, as the screen scrolls along to dragon, wait until the stars fly out and press Start. You should hear a sound that indicates the cheat is active.

Now start the game and press C on the seconds' controller to pause the game. You can now use the cheat by doing any of the following combinations:

C – Warp to Stage 1
B – Warp to Stage 2
B and C – Warp to Stage 3
A – Warp to Stage 4
A and C – Warp to Stage 5
A and B – Warp to Stage 6
A, B and C – Warp to Stage 7
Start – Warp to Stage 8

Dragons. Don't you just love 'em? Well, no actually!

Alternatively, press A on the second controller to pause the game and then press any of these combinations:

PAD 2, B – Start playing again
PAD 1, Up and PAD 2, B – Maximises hit points
PAD 1, Left and PAD 2, B – Raise lightning level
PAD 1, Right and PAD 2, B – Raise current monster level
PAD 1, Lightning button and PAD 2, B – Power up lightning
PAD 1, Monster select button and PAD 2, B – Become immortal

GYNOUG

Oh look, a horizontally scrolling Mega Drive shoot-'em-up. There's nothing like an original game... and this is nothing like an original game.

Go to the options' screen and move the cursor down to the control section. Hold down A, B and C for about ten seconds and you should get a level select. Also, when the game-over screen appears, hold down Left, A and C and press Start. Your number of credits won't go down, so you can continue for as long as you like.

OLYMPIC GOLD

If you've always fancied yourself as a bit of a couch athlete, this is the game you've been waiting for...

OLYMPIC GOLD
Barcelona

It's 1992, and, if we're not mistaken, it's been an Olympic year. So, if you weren't good enough to be there in person, and you enjoy having sweaty palms as much as you enjoy annoying your mates by beating their high scores, then this is the game for you.

There are seven gruelling events and each requires unique skills. Can you beat your personal best and compete against the computer on Olympic level? Or will you forever be a club-only athlete?

It's just you and your joypad against the world, so go for it!

The real problem you'll have with *Olympic Gold* is that every event is controlled in a different way, and some of them require real skill. But with our unique event-by-event guide, breaking world records should become second nature.

100 METRES

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ No function

Ⓐ Ⓑ Press alternately to run

Ⓒ Dive for the line

Ⓢ Pause

P. Mellerick

This is really simple, it's just a matter of pressing A and B really fast. The real difficulty, however, is the starting gun, which is always random – sometimes going off quickly and sometimes not. The best tactic is to get ready by moving your fingers in motion, but not actually touching the joypad. Then, when you hear the pistol, start pressing the buttons.

Don't forget to press C to duck over the line and, therefore, shave a few hundredths of a second off your time.

HAMMER

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ No function

Ⓐ Ⓑ Press alternately to speed up spin

Ⓒ 1) Press to pick up hammer
2) Press to start spinning
3) Press to release hammer

Ⓢ Pause

Remember to make use of the practice mode in all of the events, especially the hammer. Watch the two bars in the practice screen, and success will be yours. The first bar represents your general speed and the second the power generated.

When you start, you'll see that the power bar fluctuates depending on the position you're in. If you press C when this bar is at maximum, you'll throw something like 85 metres. Practice this with full speed as well, and you could throw 90.10 metres – our personal best...

10
P. Mellerick

ARCHERY

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ Aims bow

⇦ Pulls back arrow

Ⓐ 1) Press to pick up an arrow
2) Press to fire arrow

Ⓢ Pause

P. Mellerick

This is the sport in which all us supposed top international athletes shake like turkies being introduced to Bernard Matthews.

The amount you pull back the bow string determines how powerful your shot is. Ideally (to work perfectly with the sight) you should pull back fully and then ease off a little. But the slacker the string, the more effect the wind will have. So in this compromise situation, it's better to pull full back and then aim a little lower than the sights would suggest.

POLE VAULT

⬆ Pushes your body upwards

⬅ Guides your body over the beam

Ⓐ Ⓑ Press alternately to run

Ⓒ Press to release pole at top of vault

Ⓢ Pause

The fifth event and, without doubt, one of the most awkward ones. The controls take a lot of getting used to, so time invested in practise-mode will yield dividends in a real competition.

Run up to the beam and your pole will automatically be put into the ground for you. Press Up and just before you become vertical release yourself by pressing C and you should leap up. Now guide yourself left and over the bar. Again it's tough, but 6.35 metres isn't impossible.

DIVING

⬆ Starts jump

⬅ Walks left along the diving board

⬇ 1) Press to spring
2) Press to fall out of a dive

Ⓐ Press to somersault

Ⓑ Press to spin

Ⓢ Pause

With so many options in the diving, it's difficult to know which to choose first. Twists and turns may earn you more points, but will you have the time or skill to execute them?

The safest thing to go for is a basic somersault with as many turns as possible. Use the watch mode in the practice screen to see how it should be done, not forgetting to watch how to come out of the dive. Then pick your best effort for the freestyle dive, and a gold medal will be yours (and hopefully a world record).

SWIMMING

⬆ ⬇ ⬅ ➡ No function

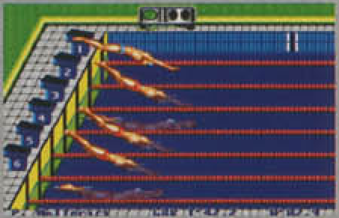
Ⓐ Ⓑ Press alternately to swim

Ⓒ Press to turn

Ⓢ Pause

It is essential to concentrate on your stamina bar. Learn how fast you can go without your stamina bar going down, and keep to this rhythm.

The second crucial skill is turning. Turn as late as possible, but not *too* late – you'll get the hang of it. Wait until your character's fingers are just about to touch the end of the pool and then tap C. This will give you a big push off and then keep you ahead. With just under half a length to go, you can then put on a burst of speed, and use up the rest of your stamina.



110 METRE HURDLES

⬆ ⬇ ⬅ ➡ No function

Ⓐ Ⓑ Press alternately to run

Ⓒ Jump!

Ⓒ Dive for the line

Ⓢ Pause

Once you've got the jumping rhythm sorted out, the 110 metre hurdles is basically the same as the 100 metre sprint. Don't forget to press C to duck over the line.

OOOH, THEY'RE BIG AREN'T THEY?

See how MEGA's personal bests compare to current world records:

HAMMER

MEGA: 90.15 metres

World and Olympic record currently held by:
S Litivinov OR 84.80M
Y Sedykh WR 86.74M

HURDLES

MEGA: 12.48 seconds

World and Olympic record currently held by:
Roger Kingdom OR 12.98
Roger Kingdom WR 12.92

DIVING

MEGA: 405.7 points

World and Olympic record currently held by:
G Louganis OR 322.0
G Louganis WR 343.0

100 METRES

MEGA: 9.55 seconds

World and Olympic record currently held by:
Carl Lewis OR 9.92
Carl Lewis WR 9.86

ARCHERY

MEGA: 162 points

World and Olympic record currently held by:
Kim Soo Nyung OR 167
Kim Soo Nyung WR 167

POLE VAULT

MEGA: 6.25 metres

World and Olympic record currently held by:
S Bubka OR 5.90M
S Bubka WR 6.10M

SWIMMING

MEGA: 1 minute 45.8 seconds

World and Olympic record currently held by:
D Armstrong OR 1.46.2
G Lanberti WR 1.46.2

GOLDEN AXE 2

Take the original *Golden Axe*, add gob-smacking graphics, a slightly tougher challenge, and out-of-this-world magic effects, and you get *Golden Axe 2* – a classic!

Q Send a boy to do a man's job and what do you get? A. The job left half-finished and an evil monster out for revenge.

After defeating Dark Guld the first time, you thought you'd finished him off. Sorry, no chance. He's back, he's angry and he's been pumping iron. Bigger, badder and with more (nastier than ever) followers for you to deal with, this mission's going to be a real toughy.

Choose your character and strive to get through seven levels of mutant-infested danger. From a ravaged village to Dark Guld's chamber, your mission will be tough all the way. But, learn to use your magic well, and the gods may shine on you. Good luck!

GET A GRIP

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ Guides your chosen character around

Ⓐ Magic. The longer you hold A down, the more potion you use up and the more powerful the spell is

Ⓑ Attack. Swing that weapon!

Ⓒ Jump!

Ⓢ Pauses the game

A GUIDE TO FANCY WEAPON-WAVING

It is possible (just) to complete the whole of *Golden Axe 2* using only the basic combat moves. The real trick to getting on in *Golden Axe 2*, however, is to memorise all the special moves for each character and learn when best to use them. All these moves involve intricate joypad techniques and mad button pressing, but we can show you how it's done...

TYRIS-FLARE (AMAZON WOMAN)

① **FLYING KICK**
Press either left or right button twice in quick succession and then press B. This will send Tyris flying feet first across half the screen into some poor mutant. Not very strong, but highly effective if you don't want to get too close.

② **SOMERSAULT KICK**
Pressing B and C at the same time makes Tyris do a standing somersault. While she's in mid-air, she'll kick the guy in front of her. Ouch!

③ **DOUBLE JUMP SLASH**
If you really want to cause some damage, then this one's always good for a laugh. Take a run and then press C to really fly. Keep tapping B as you come down and you'll inflict some serious damage.

AX-BATTLER (BARBARIAN)

① **SHOULDER BARGE**
Same technique as Tyris-Flare, in that you press B while running. Ax will fly, shoulder first, into the oncoming opponent.

② **DOUBLE WHAMMY**
Stuck in a rut? This'll get you out, no problem. Standing still, press B and C at the same time and Ax will double-slash the attacker in front of him and then turn, jump and slash downwards on the person behind. Nasty!

③ **BIG ATTACK**
This is a useful attack against skeletons, as they can only take a few hits of this magnitude. Run then jump while continually pressing B for a devastating display of how to make skeletal kebab.

GILIUS THUNDERHEAD (DWARF)

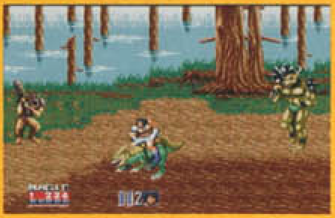
① **HEAD BUTT**
He may be small but he's by no means a wimp, and this head butt will knock you into the middle of next week. Run and press B and watch Gilius (silly name but I'm not going to tell him) lay out everything in his path.

② **SPINNING AXE KICK**
Wait until the baddies are in range. Press B and C together, and Gilius plants his axe in the ground and does a 360-degree turn around it, introducing the bad guys to his shoe leather.

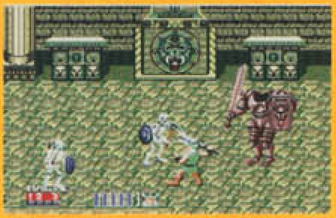
③ **LITTLE BIG ATTACK**
The axe is the most powerful weapon and, with a lot of momentum behind it, it's even more deadly. Run and jump and again keep hacking away as you fall to earth.

OH DEAR! IT'S THE END OF THE LEVEL

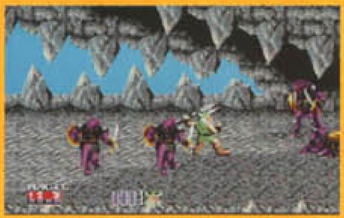
The end-of-level baddies in *Golden Axe 2* get meaner and tougher as you progress. Each bad guy, however, does have a weak spot. We show you their short-comings, and tell you how to get them while they're down



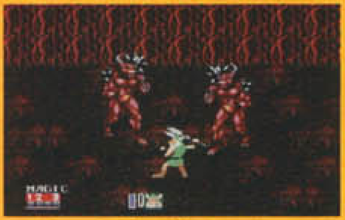
① **Boss 1 – The Minotaur** Get rid of the soldiers and then draw the minotaur towards you. Perform a jumping slash and move away. Keep repeating this and he'll eventually perish. Use the dragon, if you can!



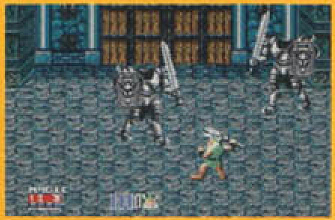
② **Boss 2 – Headless Knight** Use your magic to kill the skeletons and then use the same tactics as you did for the minotaur



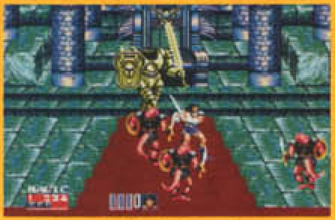
③ **Boss 3 – The Four Lizards** You'll stumble across four lizards (resembling Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) as you walk into the dragon's throat. Watch your back and you should be fine (as long as you keep hacking and slashing of course)



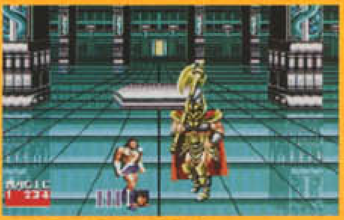
④ **Boss 4 – Two Minotaurs** Kill the two lizards first (because the minotaurs won't move) and then use the same jumping slash move-away technique as before



⑤ **Boss 5 – Two Headless Knights** Use your magic straight away and then alternate your attack between the two knights. The old jumping slash attack works best



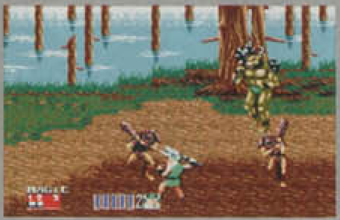
⑥ **Boss 6 – Single Headless Knight** Use your magic against the three lizards and then finish them off with your chopper. Then use your jumping slash treatment on the headless knight



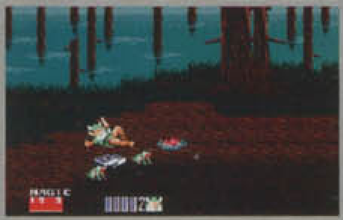
⑦ **Boss 7 – Dark Guld** The Dark Guld is seriously tough. Dodge the fireballs, which contain skeletons, and attack him. Then attack the skeletons and alternate between the two

THIS CHEAT IS PURE MAGIC...

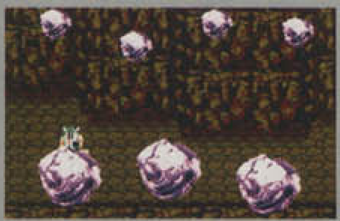
Fancy 200 units of magic? No problem at all. Just follow this guide, and you'll be set up for the rest of the game. Don't try to use any more than the standard maximum amount, or your game will crash-out. Apart from this small restriction, however, you're free to sling as much magic around as you like.



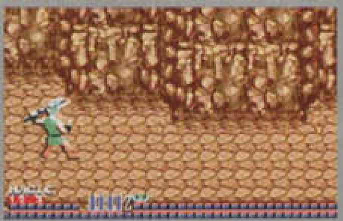
① Work your way through to the first boss and hold down A. Keep holding it down until you've killed him



② When the scene changes to the overnight camp, let go of button A and don't press anything else. Don't touch a thing!



③ When you start the new level, you'll use your magic



④ After you've used it, your magic bar will show 200 units – ample for the rest of the game!

SKIPPING STAGES...

Stage selection is now possible in *Golden Axe 2*. When the intro rolls, hold down A, B and C, and press Start. Continue to hold down A, but release B and C. While still holding down A, press B and C together to enter the options' screen. Continue to hold down A, but release B and C. Highlights exit. While holding down A, press B and C together to return to the main menu. Continue to hold down A, but release B and C. While still holding down A, press B and C together to select the number of players. Keep holding down all three of these buttons and press Start to choose the normal game. While still holding down A, B and C, highlight your character, hold down Up, and press Start. Now, holding down A and C, pick any *Golden Axe 2* level!

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MEGA MEDIC

If you've got a Mega problem, and it's not too embarrassing to put down on paper, mail it to the MEGA MEDIC (alias Paul Mellerick), who will do his utmost to propose a printable solution

STRIKING OUT

Q I can get to the end of *Desert Strike*, where I have to blow up the nuclear bomber. But, when I try to do this, I get told to go back to the frigate because I've killed my co-pilot. What am I doing wrong?

N Schwarzkopf, somewhere in America

A Unless you know what to do, this one is a real pain in the bottom-area. To rescue your co-pilot, you need to blow a hole in the middle of the bomber and then wait. Your co-pilot will pop out and walk along the wing. Move your helicopter close to him and pick him up, then concentrate on blowing up the bomber.

STUFFED AT HOCKEY

Q My mate keeps stuffing me at *EA Hockey* and I don't know what to do. Can you suggest any good ways of scoring, please?

M Lemuiex, Canada

A There are several ways and means to score, but there's also a cheat that works really well. Try to position yourself in the middle of the ice and go straight towards your opponent's goal. When you're just outside the red area, press B instead of C and, if your timing and position are right, you'll slide the puck in between the keepers legs. But, if you can't get that to work, another tactic which works well is to hold down C when you're just inside the blue line and let fly with a whacking shot, beating the keeper for speed and making you look really good.

STREETS AHEAD OF THE REST

Q I've had the excellent *Streets of Rage* game for a few months now and, thanks to the easy level and continues, I've finished it, but only just. I'd really like to know how to beat the really difficult bosses, such as the fire breathers and Blaze's sisters, without losing lives.

F Bruno, London

Don't hang about, kick 'em

A *Streets of Rage* eh! One of my fave Mega Drive games and you're right, some of the bosses are a bit tough. But let's start with the easiest, the fire breather. As he diagonally runs towards you, the trick is to get behind him. Then punch him twice and stop so that he doesn't fall over. Keep punching him twice and stopping, so that you take down his power but he doesn't fall over or breathe fire at you, easy. If Blaze only had one sister, this wouldn't be so tough as you wouldn't need to keep a look out behind you. He has got two sister though, so the best form of attack is to lay into one of them after she's tried to get you with her spinning kick. Alternate between the two and you'll be okay. It does take time, so be patient.

Stand in front of him and punch

BATMAN BUMMER

Q I have recently bought *Batman* on official release. Unfortunately, I am finding the game very tough and I keep losing all my lives and continues. Can you help?

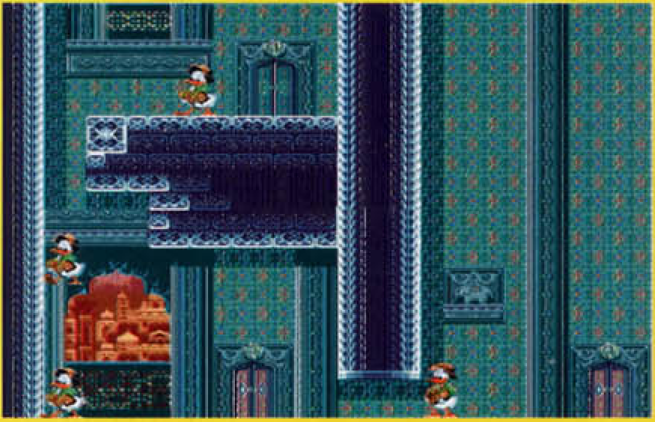
Mr Yo, Stourbridge

QUACKING ALL THE WAY TO THE TIGER

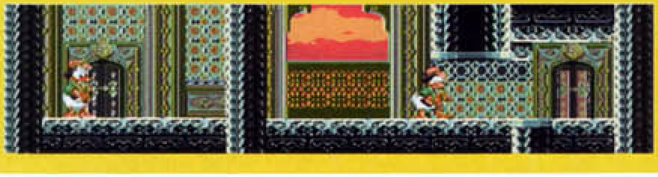
Q I've played *Quackshot* to death, but I still can't find the route through the Majharajah's rooms to get to the tiger. Do you know?

M Mouse, Florida

A Yep, sure do. It's a bit complex, so follow the route shown in the screenshots and don't forget to jump over a door you don't want to go through.



① Door one: You start at door one. When you appear, walk left and fall down. Walk right and jump over the door. Now slide under the gap and enter the door that brings you out to door five



② Door five: Easy this one. All you have to do is walk right and enter the next door – this'll bring you out at door two

A Yes. On the third level there is an extra life up the first chimney. Get this and carry on upwards a bit. Go back down and the extra life should be there again. Do this until you have nine lives. This can also be done with the Batrangs, up to a maximum of 99.

BLOODY HELLFIRE

Q Being a shoot-'em-up fanatic, I've recently been playing *Hellfire* to death. The trouble is that I can't get past the mummy guardian on level two. Can you tell me how to do this, as I keep getting squashed when he comes after me? ***B Rogers, somewhere in the 25th century***

A This one's actually quite easy if you know how the mummy guardian moves. When he appears on screen, select your Up and Down and fire and blast away at his middle point. When he lifts off, move to the right and under his body. Avoid the bullets but keep firing. He'll now move towards you, so move to the bottom left-hand corner and fire at him. Keep doing this and he'll soon perish.

SWING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

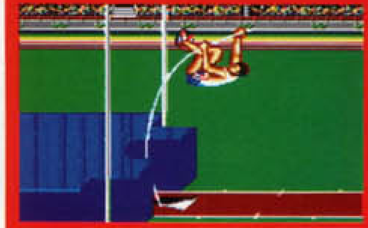
Q I wondered if you could give me some general tips for *PGA Tour Golf*, as I am having some trouble scoring a par on most holes. ***Mr N Faldo, somewhere in England***

A Of course I can help. The real thing to watch out for in *PGA* is the wind. Watch for the gusts and, if they are in your favour, use them to gain more yards. Also, don't use your overswing too much except when teeing off. If your ball is in the deep rough, always try to get it back on the fairway or slight rough – otherwise it is very difficult to get a long accurate shot. If you need some practice on certain holes, save your progress regularly before each difficult hole. Indeed, if you need to, do this at every hole.

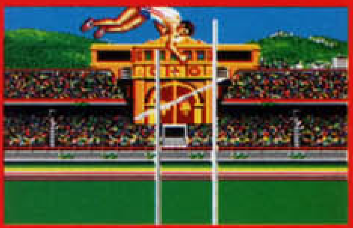
THE RIGHT WAY TO RIDE YOUR POLE

Q I'm having trouble doing the pole vault on *Olympic Gold*. Can you help me out? *D Thompson, not Barcelona*

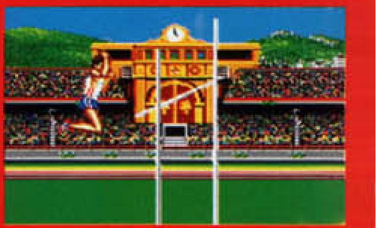
A The pole vault is probably the most difficult event on *Olympic Gold*. It requires speed and timing, but it isn't impossible. Press A and B as fast as possible on the run up and keep pressing. The game automatically puts the pole in the ground, and when your pole is planted, press Up (still pressing A and B) and when you are almost vertical, press C (this pushes you off the pole) then press and hold Left and you should clear the height. My personal best is 6.35 metres



Stick your pole in the ground and ride up skywards. Trouble is you didn't stick the pole in properly



Never mind, you let go at the right time and now you're sailing over the bar. Nice view, isn't it?



Oooh... Forgot I was so high up, I think I'm gonna be sick. Catch!

DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER

Q I've just bought a Mega Drive and with it the fab, not to say groovy game, *Rainbow Islands*. But someone told me that to finish the game I have to collect all the big diamonds from the bosses secret rooms. What are the secret rooms and where can I find them? ***Mr Bubble Bobble, Japan***

A As you'll already know, the basic idea in *Rainbow Islands* is to collect all the diamonds on the level and then collect the big one at the end when you finish the boss. But, if you collect the diamonds in order (red, orange, yellow, green, light blue, dark blue and purple), you will receive a perfect bonus. Then when you enter the boss room, a secret door will appear. Kill the boss, collect all the goodies and then walk on your rainbows or the platforms and go through the door. Inside you'll get even more prizes and another big diamond. Do this on all seven worlds and you would enter the final completion stage. I say "would" because they didn't programme it in, so you can't really finish the game.

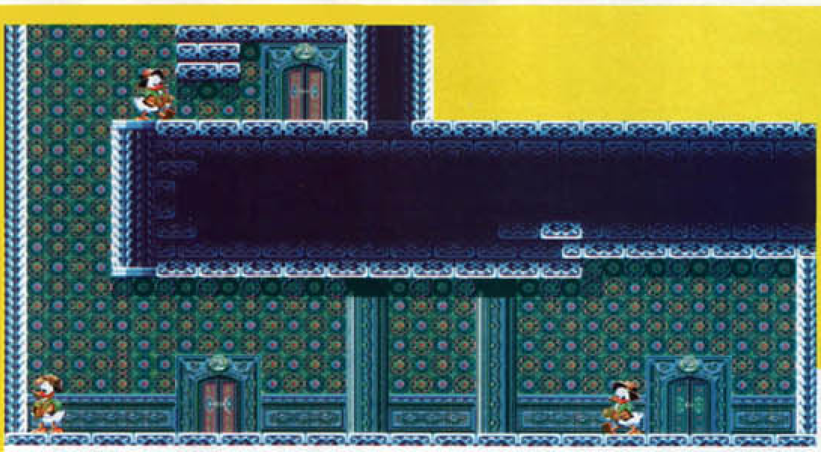
SLOW FINGERS

Q How can I improve my speeds in *Olympic Gold*? My fingers just won't move fast enough. ***D Thompson, Crystal Palace***

A Maybe you should see a professional. The best thing I can suggest is that you should try to use one finger and rub it across the two buttons as fast as possible. (Strange guy!)

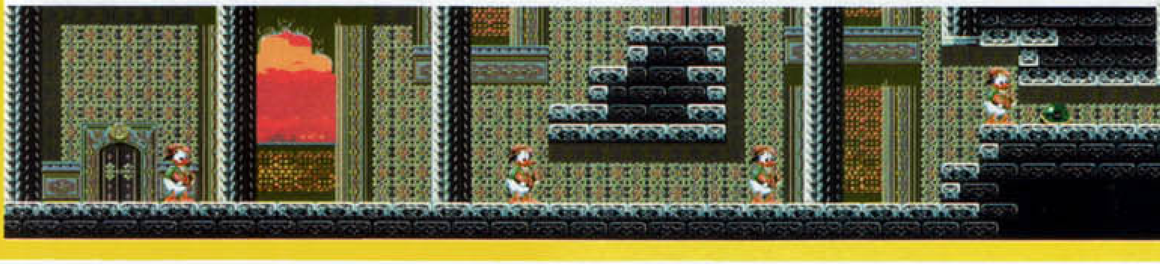
MY CAT'S CALLED SNOWY

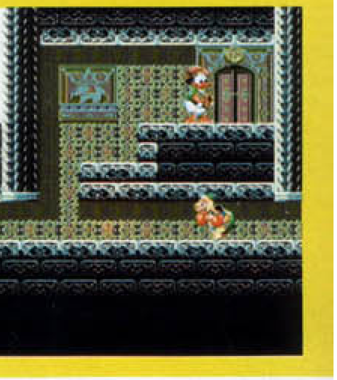
Q Can you please tell me how to defeat the snowman at the end of *Robocod*. It's driving me nutty. ***Mr Thicky Dweeb, Bath***



③ Door two: Another tricky one this, sort of a reverse of door one. Walk left and jump over the door and then, using your red plunger, climb up the wall. You'll see a door, slide under the flap and go through it. You're now out at door six

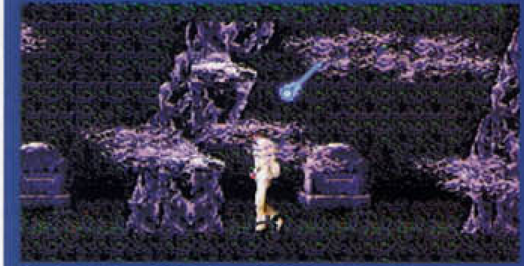
④ Door six: Again, this is similar to door five, but it's longer and slightly tougher. Carry on right and slide along the gap. You'll see a hole above your head. You need to slide along and pop up the hole to get inside, and then you can go through the door. Do this and you'll then meet up with the tiger



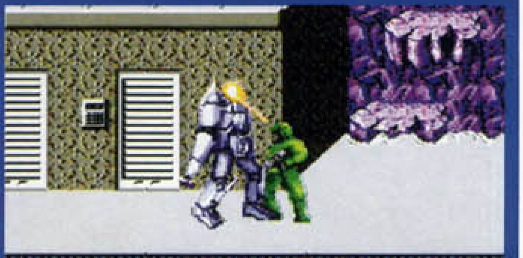


WISHING ON A STAR

Q How do I become the robot in *Moonwalker*? On the last level, it happens automatically, but how do you turn into the robot in earlier levels? And is it worth the effort?
P Moore, London



It's behind you! Watch out MJ, that shootin' star's gonna set your hair alight (again) teehee!



Just in time... Catch the falling star and the transformation is truly miraculous. What's more, the robot suit won't fall apart on him! Brill-a-roony

A It's definitely worth turning into the robot, as you then become well-hard and it's makes the level much easier. But how do you get it? Well, it's simple, catch a falling star.

A No problem. It's quite tough, but follow this pattern and you should be okay. Kill the little bloke and then wait for the snowman to throw his head at you. Bounce on the head as many times as possible, it takes ages but it's not impossible.

DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD

Q *Decap Attack* is getting me down. Do you have a cheat that will give me unlimited energy?
J Saville, London

A It's not exactly an infinite energy cheat, more of a come-back-and-get-some-energy cheat. When you see a bouncy pole, don't just use it to swing back and forth, but land *directly* on top of it and one of the sections will go white. This gives you half a section of energy every time you do it, and don't forget that you can keep coming back to it until it turns completely white.

FLYING HIGH

Q Have you got a code to get me to the last level of *F22 Interceptor*? I've never been able to get that far and want to have a bash at the hardest level.
J Jumbo, Heathrow

A I assume that by the last level you mean the Aces challenge. Well, get ready for a really tough challenge. Type in MH01K1 and away you go.

INFINITE FANTASIA

Q Do you know of a way to get infinite lives on *Fantasia*? I find the game very tough, and would appreciate any help you can give me.
M Mouse, Florida

A Tell me about it. This game is a real pain in the lower regions (and I don't mean my ankles, either). But thanks to a little program bug, you can build up loads of lives. Work your way through the first part and get the 1-UP on top of the platforms. Carry on through the game until you get to the magic book. Take the book and keep moving right until you get to a treasure chest which warps you back to the 1-UP. Do this for as long as you like to build up your lives.

MISSING MARBLES

Q How do you access the secret level in *Marble Madness*?
S Holmes, London

A Sorry, bad news I'm afraid. They didn't program the secret level in. It's not there.

WHIPPING MR WHIPPY

Q How do I beat the final boss at the end of *Revenge Of Shinobi*? Is there a simple method, or should I have collected a special weapon or something?
J Major, Westminster

A Yes, you should collect a special weapon at the end of the level before you go through the door, but you don't *have* to get it in order to beat the boss. When the Neo-Zeed (or Mr Whippy to his friends) comes on screen and starts flicking his hair, crouch-kick him and then immediately step back. Judge where his hair is going to go and try to dodge it. Do this quite a few times, not forgetting to fire at the hole in the wall to stop the ceiling from coming down.

TO SUB, OR NOT TO SUB?

Q Is it always best to substitute your goalkeeper in *EA Hockey*?
B Grobbelar, Liverpool

A Yes. And no. Sorry, but it's really a case of trial and error. Because you don't know the stats for each goalie, you can't really tell. The best thing is to try all of them out and see. But if you play with the Soviet Union, then yes, change the goalie.

SICK OF GETTING SLAUGHTERED

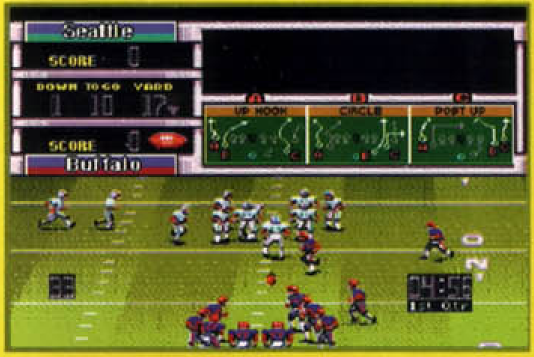
Q I've had the quite good *Slaughter Sport* for some time now, but I can't really get far enough so that I can play as any of the other characters. I was wondering if, in your infinite wisdom, you knew the codes to input at the start of the level?
Myself, my place

A There are not many one-on-one beat-'em-ups on the Mega Drive and this one's OK, I suppose. But

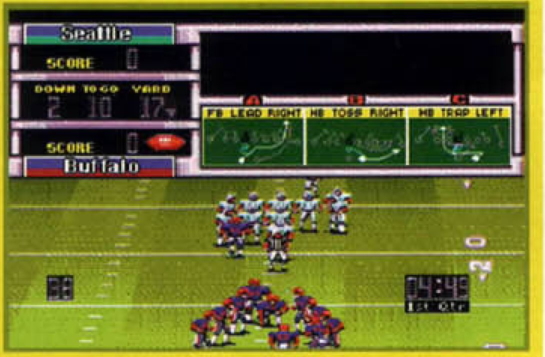
MAD ON CROSS-PASSES

Q What's the single best offensive play in *John Madden '92*? My friends reckon that the cross-pass to receiver A always guarantees a 10-yard gain, but what do you reckon?
S Gelbaugh, London

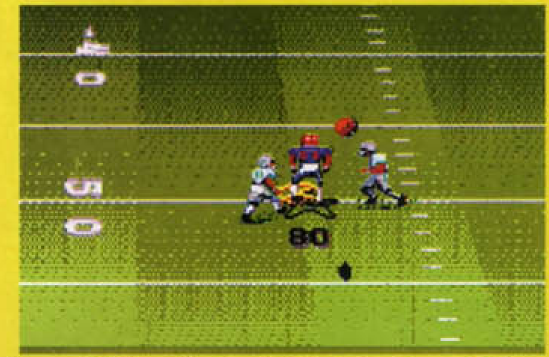
A Yes, the cross-pass is good, but no way is it the best. If by best, you mean the one which will get you the most yards, then you really should go for a shotgun, run and shoot, up-hook to receiver A. This (if timed correctly) could give you up to 40 yards. But if running is your game, then have a go at a half-back cross right.



Okay boys, it's time for the big up-hook. Let's go for it...



This time we'll try to run past them, OK?



Yeesss! Well caught. Now don't just stand there... RUN

Quick, run fast enough and we might score

back to your plea. Yes I do know the codes, so get your joypad ready and read on. When it says Start on the title screen, press the following button combinations, then press Start again, to become a character other than Rex (the normal human being).

Bonopart: Press A, then Up, then C
Buff: Press Left, then C, then B
El Toro: Press B and C together, then A, then Up
Guano: Press Up, then Right and A and B together
MC Fire: Press Down, then C, then Right
Mondu: Press A and B together, then Down, then Left
Ramses: Press Right, then Left, then A
Robo Chic: Press Right, then Up, then Down
Sheba: Press B and C together, then B, then B again
Skinny: Press Right, then Down, then Right
Webra: Press A and C together, then Up, then Right
Weezil: Press Down, then Right, then Up

DYING TO KNOW

Q Not yet having bought a Mega CD, I decided to buy the shoot-'em-up *Sol-Deace* on cartridge instead. Do you know any tips which will make the game any easier, because I keep dying on level four?
A Loser, Nowhere

A Having played both versions (CD and cart), I know how tough the game is. But you'll be happy to hear that there is a stage-select cheat, a 99-ships cheat and a slow-motion mode. Here's how you go about them:

On the title screen press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A and Start. Enter the config mode and move the cursor to Start. Now choose your level. Next, move the cursor to Mode and press right until the symbol MY99 appears. You'll now have 99 ships and you can start on any level you like.

If you get bored in game, you can skip levels by pressing buttons A, B and C together. To play in slow motion pause the game and tap the fire button.

Note: These cheats may not work on the Mega CD, but they definitely work on cart.

WE WANT YOUR QUESTIONS!

So there we are chaps (and chapettes)... a taste of some of the tips which MEGA's man Mellerick can give. When it comes to Mega Drive short-cuts, he's a never-ending source of knowledge, a constant flow of spring water, indeed, a total bore to the uninitiated. So, if you need a bit of pointing in the right direction, write to MEGA MEDIC, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

LIFT-OFF

Q How do I get through the lift section in *Taz-Mania*? Please could you print a map?
D Duck, The Village Pond

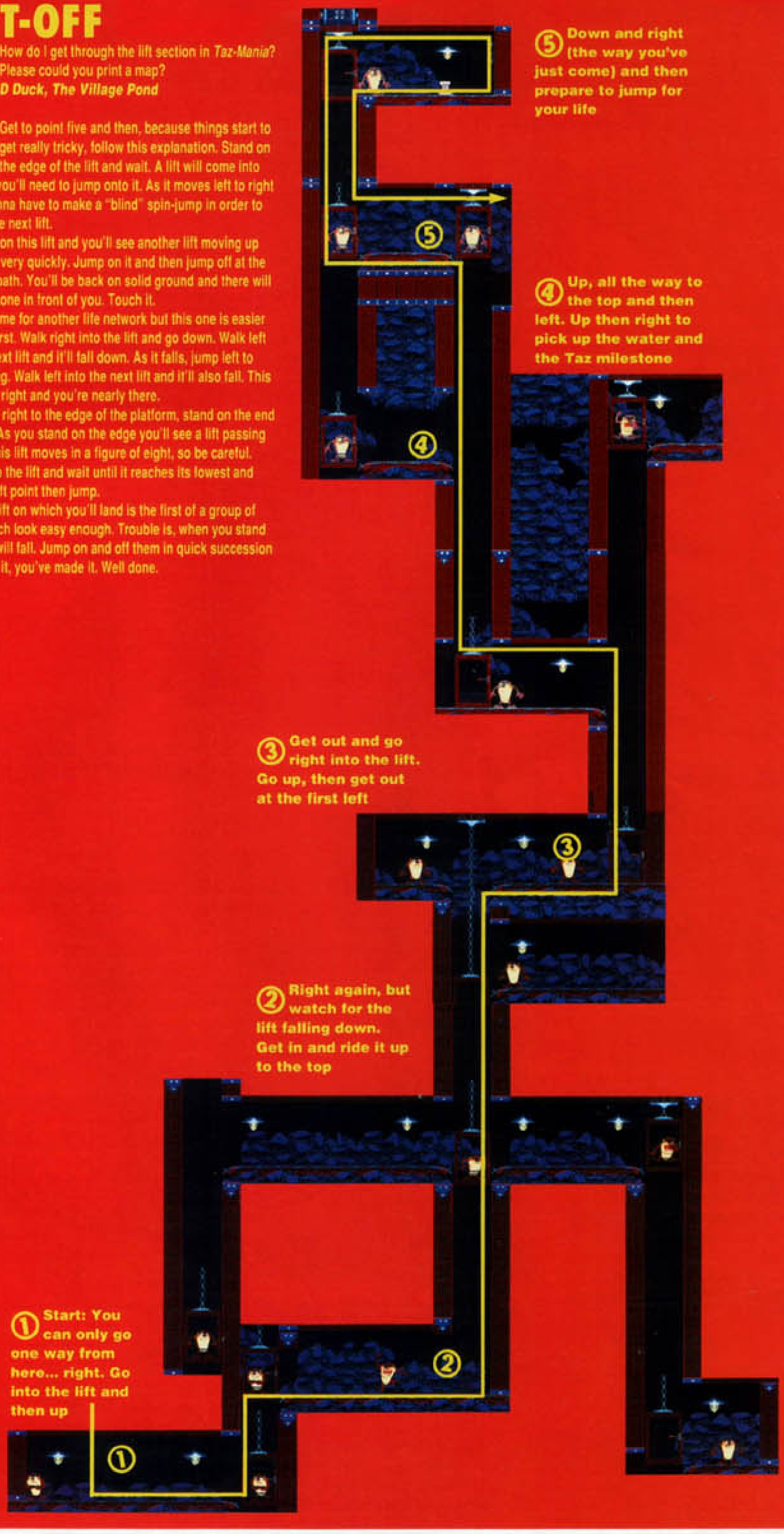
A Get to point five and then, because things start to get really tricky, follow this explanation. Stand on the edge of the lift and wait. A lift will come into view and you'll need to jump onto it. As it moves left to right you're gonna have to make a "blind" spin-jump in order to land on the next lift.

Stay on this lift and you'll see another lift moving up and down very quickly. Jump on it and then jump off at the top of its path. You'll be back on solid ground and there will be a millstone in front of you. Touch it.

It's time for another life network but this one is easier than the first. Walk right into the lift and go down. Walk left into the next lift and it'll fall down. As it falls, jump left to avoid dying. Walk left into the next lift and it'll also fall. This time jump right and you're nearly there.

Walk right to the edge of the platform, stand on the end and wait. As you stand on the edge you'll see a lift passing by you. This lift moves in a figure of eight, so be careful. Jump onto the lift and wait until it reaches its lowest and furthest left point then jump.

The lift on which you'll land is the first of a group of three, which look easy enough. Trouble is, when you stand on one it will fall. Jump on and off them in quick succession and that's it, you've made it. Well done.



⑤ Down and right (the way you've just come) and then prepare to jump for your life

④ Up, all the way to the top and then left. Up then right to pick up the water and the Taz milestone

③ Get out and go right into the lift. Go up, then get out at the first left

② Right again, but watch for the lift falling down. Get in and ride it up to the top

① Start: You can only go one way from here... right. Go into the lift and then up

ARENA

Wacky challenges, hidden rooms, secret bonuses and incredibly strange happenings – come with MEGA as we go where no tips have gone before...

CRAZY CHALLENGES

So, you think you're good at playing games, do you? Well, how *bad* are you at playing them? Yes, it's wacky challenge time. No more "I bet you can't beat my high score in five minutes", it's time for something completely different. So here are five crazy, stupid and downright tough challenges. Now get to it.

① SONIC

Let's start with everybody's favourite, shall we? Yep, it's *Sonic*, but this time we want you to try to get through the Green Hill Zone, act one, with no points at all. Yes, absolutely zilcho. It can be done – you've just got to figure out how.

② HELLFIRE

Fancy a blast? Then get to grips with *Hellfire*. Get all the way through level one (including both bosses) but with a score of under 25,000 points.

③ JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL (any version)

Think you're a *Madden* hotshot do you? Then try to score a touchdown in your first drive. If you're really flash, try doing it on your first play – we can. Remember, you can only use the D-pad and button C, so select your play with C, snap with C, pass with C and then charge with C.

④ EA HOCKEY

EA Hockey this time. Can you thrash the computer? Big deal. Now let's see how much you can let the computer thrash you. Pick any teams you want, and five-minute periods. The bigger the defeat the better – but you're doing OK if you lose by more than ten goals. The only rule is that you're not allowed to barge your own goalie, OK?

Also see if you can score an own goal from more than a couple of feet out. It's tougher than you think.

⑤ BULLS VS LAKERS

It's basketball and it's time for *Bulls Vs Lakers*. You're not allowed to score inside the two-point line. Yep, you're only allowed to go for three pointers. See if you can beat the computer, and if you're really lucky, try to win a best-of-seven in the playoffs. Only the hottest shots will get through this one.

SEGA SECRETS

Got a game? Think you've finished it? Don't be so sure. Have you really discovered everything that your game has to offer? If you think you know something that we don't, drop us a line.

① SPIDERMAN

Not so much a secret room, but more of a secret route. Select the nightmare level and get into the warehouse (level one).

When you get past the dog, you'll see a pile of boxes. Stand on the second row and crawl to the right, you'll go straight through the wall to the guy in the fork-lift truck.

② TOE JAM & EARL

1. From the very start of the game, move up to the third world (or above) and find yourself with some rocket skates, some Icarus wings or a rubber ring. Don't open them yet!

2. Fall off the edge of level three and keep falling until you reach level one again.

3. Open the present which you just collected on level three, and start heading down and to the left.

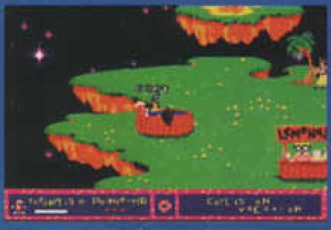
4. Keep flying, floating or zooming until you reach the secret island. If you get lost, use the map for reference.

5. When you reach the island, fall down the hole in the middle. You'll leave level one and enter the secret level zero.

6. Jump in the tub with the hula girls. Drink some lemonade for an extra life, and generally unwind and have a relaxing time.

7. When you've had enough fun, grabbed all the presents and collected your extra life from the lemonade stand, jump off the edge...

8. And you'll appear back on level three! From here you can continue your adventure as if nothing strange had happened at all.



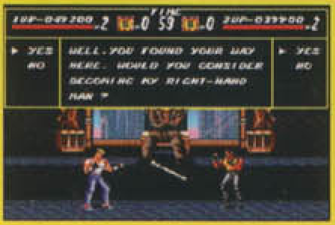
Fantasy Island: where every Toe Jam or Earl should be sure to visit

GOT ANY GIMMICKS?

Then share them with us. We'll be awarding a prize to the person who sends in the best game secret, wacky challenge or hidden happening each month. So put pen to paper (and crayon to map, if necessary) and send your contributions to: Arena, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

STRANGE HAPPENINGS (MAN)

Secret rooms, hidden warps, strange, bizarre and generally way-out "happenings" – nearly every cart has something out of the ordinary, it's just a matter of knowing where to look. Here are just three games which have hidden bits. If you know of any more, then send them in.

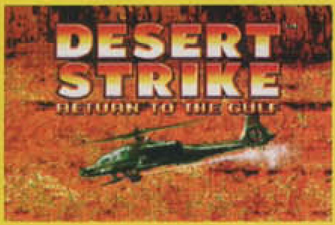


WELL, YOU FOUND YOUR WAY HERE. WOULD YOU CONSIDER BECOMING MY RIGHT-HAND MAN ?

① STREETS OF RAGE

Have you ever come across "BAD ENDING" at the sound test and wondered what exactly it was and how to get to it?

Well, we'll tell you. Play to the very end with your mate, and when Mr Big asks you if you want to become his right-hand man, both of you say yes. You'll both be warped back to level six. Work your way to the end again and when the boss asks the same question, both say yes. Now you'll have to fight it out for the dubious honour of being his right-hand man.



② DESERT STRIKE

Silly this really, but it actually works. When you turn on the game and the Apache AH-64 attack helicopter with the words "DESERT STRIKE" appear on screen, you can fire Hellfires by pressing button A.

This doesn't effect the game, but hey, neither does eating an Ice Cream Bounty Bar – and that's one of our favourite pastimes.

PRELIMINARY RACE

③ SUPER MONACO GP

Play the Monaco circuit and finish in the top three. Then do the same for the wet circuit, but just before you cross, hold down buttons A, B and C. Instead of holding up the trophy you'll be holding up your own head when you stand on the winner's rostrum!

Also, did you know that if you smash into the guy holding the chequered flag at the end of the Monaco race, he'll fly away into the background? Do this, however, and you'll lose all your points.

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The best Mega Drive games of all time. They're here, they're in full controversial order and there's (ahem) 100 of them. Each entry comes with a snippet of hot news regarding sequels, alternative releases or publisher reports. The MEGA team argued for weeks over the order, but now it's done – will *you* agree? We're ready to take on anyone who wants to disagree with us so let's hear what you've got to say. And the *worst* games ever? Page 85...

① JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.95

Shock horror! It isn't *Sonic*. No, and there's a very good reason for that – *Sonic* is a wonderful, beautiful game, but you can finish it in a week without trying too hard. *John Madden Football*, on the other hand, came out at the end of 1990, and still gets played in the MEGA office to this very day. In both two-player and single-player modes, *John Madden Football* (in both its forms) is the most exciting, blood-churning, charming, absorbing, frustrating and adrenaline-pumping game we've ever played.

But why? Surely there are loads of games which offer more? No way. You want graphics? *Madden's* got them – in full parallax, multi-frame animation. You need sound? Check out the Rob Hubbard soundtrack and digitised samples throughout the game. And this game's beauty isn't just skin-deep.

You should never judge a game by its screenshots (just ask anyone who bought *Fantasia*) and so it's only when you scratch beneath the surface that you realise this game's full potential. With over one thousand play combinations, there has never been a game which offers so much depth.

Forget *EA Hockey*, forget *Speedball 2*, and forget any other game which claims to allow you to develop your own skills and tactics. Once you've truly explored *John Madden Football*, every other two-player head-to-head game will seem tame. In the brutally competitive head-to-head mode it'll last you a lifetime.

This '92 version slicked up the graphics (although a lot of players actually preferred the original, more blocky, approach) as well as tarted up the game's front end and options. So, while you'd have to be a real fan to buy both versions, you'd have to be completely and utterly out of your tree to own a Mega Drive and not get this astonishingly enduring game.

MEGA says: The best American Football game ever? Yep. The best sports game of any kind ever? Definitely. The best Mega Drive game of all-time full stop? You bet. And we'll take on anyone who says otherwise...

NEWS: The world exclusive review of *John Madden '93* will appear in the next issue of MEGA. But, if you can't wait, check out the world exclusive preview on page 24. *John Madden '93* will be released in November and will cost £39.99.

② EA HOCKEY

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

You might not have thought that ice hockey was a very good idea for a real-life-to-Mega Drive conversion and, let's face it, normally you'd be right. Amazingly though, by some astonishing quirk of fate, Park Place Productions for EASN have managed to turn it into a brilliant game anyway! Taking a strange top-down scrolling viewpoint seems even dafter, but it works beautifully, and the gameplay is as perfect as you could ever hope for it to be. Mind you, just like in the real thing, the best bit is when the gloves come off and the punch-ups start. Not as involved as *John Madden Football*, and the naïve or short-sighted player will tell you that scoring's more down to luck than skill, but for nerve-tingling tension that's absolutely second-to-none you won't find a pulse-raiser much better than this.

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EASN

MEGA says: Another fabulous sport sim from EASN. How do they do it?

NEWS: The world exclusive review of *NHLPA Hockey* (*EA Hockey '93*) is on page 32.

③ SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

OK, so it isn't number one, but you didn't seriously think it could be any lower than this, did you? It's quite possible that this is the most famous video game ever – it's certainly the one which, more than any other, lifted console games out of the spotty schoolboy ghetto and into the real-world limelight where they truly belong. Ask any rock star worth his salt these days knows who Sonic is and the chances are he'll not only know, but he demands that a Mega Drive running *Sonic The Hedgehog* is placed in his dressing room at every gig venue.

Yeah, it's a bit easy to finish but why be selfish? Isn't it nice that everyone gets a chance to see the end sequence for once? Anyway, there's so much hidden away in *Sonic The Hedgehog* and it's just so much damn fun to play that you'll never get bored with it, no matter how many times you whip nasty ol' Dr Robotnik's ass. And, if you don't still get a buzz when Sonic loops the loop at maximum speed with his super-fast boots on, get someone to check your pulse immediately – you may be dead.

MEGA says: Still the most technically stunning game the Mega Drive's ever seen, and the standard-bearer of a whole new era of video games. Completely amazing, completely brilliant.

NEWS: *Sonic 2* has got to be the most eagerly awaited game of 1992. The *official* story is that the game will hit the streets the world over on 24 November. We've heard rumours, however, that copies are likely to be flown in a week before that.

Even better news is that MEGA has reserved 50 of the first copies of *Sonic 2* to be flown into the country. To win one, turn to page 14. *Sonic 3* is being developed as you read this, and *Super Sonic* for the Mega CD is almost complete. Stay tuned. We will.

4. HELLFIRE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Hellfire, the only serious competition to *Aero Blasters* in the space-blast department, is number one in a different field. If the Mega Drive's ever seen a more accurate coin-op conversion than this, we'd like to know what it is. A clever and imaginative shoot-'em-up, *Hellfire* makes you think before you zap with four switchable weapon systems which, if you're going to make any progress through the game, have to be employed with expert speed and accuracy. The end-of-level bosses have had a bit more thought put into their design than the usual "find the weak spot and sit and pommel it for a couple of minutes" routine, and the graphics change enough from level to level to make it a real joy when you discover what's in store in each new stage. You get a lot of continues, which makes it a bit easy to complete, but hey – nothing's perfect.

MEGA says: Great stuff, although it pales a bit in the frenetic action department when you put it alongside *Aero Blasters*. If you find that one a bit too demanding, though, this'll be right up your street. A superb game.

NEWS: The team behind *Hellfire*, Toa Plan, have recently been putting a lot of effort into some pretty stonking coin-ops. We can expect to see conversions within a year.

5. SUPER MONACO GP 2 (INC. SUPER MONACO GP)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Right, we've had the sports game, the platform game and the shoot-'em-up. What's missing? Of course, the driving game! *Super Monaco GP* (Incidentally, does anyone else remember Sega's original Monaco GP arcade game? Nope, thought not.) was the most popular driving coin-op before *Out Run*, and the staggering graphics were thought by many to be completely impossible to simulate on a Mega Drive. And, indeed, they were, but disappointment turned to joy within seconds of loading this cart into the slot – the graphics may only be alright, but the gameplay is astonishing. Superb, definable control, high-speed adrenaline-pumping driving, *and* a bit of strategic depth to keep things interesting after the first few days. Like *John Madden Football*, the sequel improves significantly on the earlier game (without really changing it very much) especially in the area of car handling (thanks to input from Ayrton Senna), but with something that started off as fab as *Super Monaco GP*, that's still just window-dressing. Essential stuff.

MEGA says: The competition isn't really up to much as far as Formula One racing goes (yet), but even so, you'd have to go a long, long way to come up with a better driving game than this one. (And you'll probably have to wait a long, long time for someone to write one, anyway).

NEWS: Microprose is a big home-computer games publisher which is currently negotiating a deal with Sega to produce Mega Drive carts. Hot favourite for conversion, *if* they get the licence, is *Formula One Grand Prix*. Not the same F1 game that's nestling in the No. 46 spot, but an entirely different game which *could* turn out to be a Senna beater in almost every respect...

7. QUACKSHOT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Yes, it's another platformer; yes, it's another Disney licence; yes, it's a bit of a clone of *Mickey Mouse's Castle Of Illusion*; but none of that matters one little bit. Why not? Because *Quackshot* (even labouring under the burden of starring Donald "can't even speak properly" Duck) is excellent fun. This is the game that *Fantasia should* have been. It looks lush, it sounds lovely, and it's action-quacked (I'm really sorry about that) from start to finish.

MEGA says: Are you deaf? We said get it!

NEWS: *Mickey and Donald* or, to give it its proper, full-blown title, *World Of Illusion Starring Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck* (the fourth Sega Disney Mega Drive title) is due for release from Sega in December.

6. STREETS OF RAGE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

If every third Mega Drive game that gets released is a beat-'em-up, how come hardly any of them are any good? Thankfully, that's a question that *Streets Of Rage* doesn't have to answer, because it's great stuff – if it were only tougher to beat!

Lovely backdrops, loads of athletic fighting moves, excellent two-player action (two players can interact with each other to pull off some frightening moves) and an imaginative approach to special weapons (the police car firing rockets from half-a-dozen screens back and still managing to pick off the bad guys with pinpoint accuracy is brilliant!) all go together to make this the most challenging and rewarding game the Mega Drive has to offer in the genre.

MEGA says: If you want a beat-'em-up, there is no alternative (well, except *Golden Axe 2*).

NEWS: A massive 16MB sequel is almost finished and ready for release in January '93. You'll pay £44.99 for the extra cart size, but, if the bigger money means a bigger and tougher game, then it'll be worth it.

8. ROAD RASH

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

So you've played *Super Monaco 2* to death, huh? You're after more racing, but something with a bit more of an edge to it, right? You want *Road Rash*, mate. It might sound like a nasty disease that you get after spending too long in a sweaty boiler suit, but, in fact, *Road Rash* is a brilliant motorbike racing game with a difference – you don't just get to overtake your competitors, you get to smash their heads in as well!

Hurtle down five dangerous courses at suicidal speeds (avoiding traffic and speed cops as well as other racers), make your fortune only to spend it all on new and ever-faster bikes, and wear your knuckles down by riding alongside your enemies and punching them in the face. There are loads of bikes, loads of violence and five whole stages – this game really has got the lot.

MEGA says: Superbly atmospheric full-throttle romp that's arguably even more entertaining than *Super Monaco GP*, if a little less sophisticated. Whatever the arguments, though, there's no denying that *Road Rash* is a true classic. We advise you not to miss this one.

NEWS: Guess who has got the world exclusive preview lined up for a future issue? Yeah, MEGA will soon be giving you the first look at *Road Rash 2*. Word is that we can look forward to split-screen, two-player racing... Exciting stuff, or what?

9. RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

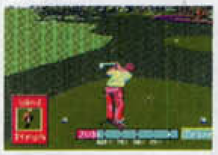
Already hailed as the best 16-bit computer game of all time, *Rainbow Islands* has come to the Mega Drive and, miraculously, has got even better. The impossibly addictive platform action is the same as ever, the amazingly cute graphics are as sweet as ever, and the devilish, fiendishly hidden bonuses are as devilish and fiendishly hidden as ever. And with Mega Drive's *Rainbow Islands* you get a whole extra game on top! Well, it's more of a variation than a completely different game, true, but the extra, harder version extends the life of a game which was already practically immortal, and makes it just about the best value-for-money investment you'll ever see in an arcade platformer. At once incredibly simple and deeply complex, *Rainbow Islands* is right up there at the peak of the platform programmer's art.

MEGA says: If you've got a UK Mega Drive, this game alone makes it worth buying a Jap adaptor. Seriously beautiful, incomparably playable and unbeatably addictive.

NEWS: Andrew Braybrook, the man responsible for the Amiga's conversion of *Rainbow Islands* (hailed as the best home-computer game of all time) has just switched allegiances and has started programming for Mega Drive. MEGA will be following his progress..

10. PGA TOUR GOLF

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



There isn't a lot of competition in the golf field (shouldn't that be "course"? – Ed) when it comes to Mega Drive games, but what there is, *PGA Tour* is miles ahead of. The graphics are exquisite, the control is practically perfect, loads of people can play at once, it's got every option you could possibly want, and there's even a battery back-up. Nothing else so far captures that elusive "wandering around a beautiful landscape pausing occasionally to batter a harmless little ball around with a series of big sticks" atmosphere as well as *PGA* does. *World Class Leaderboard* comes close, but if golf is your bag (ho ho), then this is your game.

MEGA says: This is the best golf game there is, and also the best Mega Drive game for more than two players. Why not club

11. SWORD OF VERMILLION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

Try not to be put off by the fearsome price tag on this one, because if you're into all that RPG hacking 'n' slashing malarkey, it'll be money well spent. *Sword Of Vermillion* is probably the best game of the type on the Mega Drive and, in a market that's becoming more crowded by the day, that's no mean feat. Big, slick and sexy.

MEGA says: Look, you're as well to spend £50 on something excellent as waste £35 on something average, aren't you? Quality costs, but it's usually worth it.

NEWS: Look out for an enhanced version of *Sword Of Vermillion* appearing on Mega CD.

Turn over

together (sorry) with your mates and buy it?

NEWS: *PGA Tour Golf 2* is on its way from EASN and should be with us early in the new year. Meanwhile, the excellent PC golf game *Links* is just itching to be converted to the Mega CD, but MEGA can neither confirm nor deny that people are already on the case (ahem). The same goes for *Microprose Golf*, from (wait for it…) Microprose.

12. PHANTASY STAR 3

Publisher: SEGA
Price: £49.99

A completely huge RPG, with loads of different worlds and a whole gang of characters to control. Try to complete *this* one in a night without using the battery back-up...

MEGA says: It's a lot of money but in terms of hours of fun per pound, you'll be hard pushed to beat this one.

NEWS: *Phantasy Star 4*, a story of the intergalactic slave trade, will be coming to a Mega CD near you in full 240MB (20 times as big as *Phantasy Star 2*) glory soon...

13. AERO BLASTERS

Publisher: Kemco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

If you're one of the not-very-many people who've played this brilliant game in the arcades (under the name of *Air Busters* more likely than not), you won't need telling what a fantastic, all-action, exciting and varied blastathon it is. If you aren't one of *those people*, then be told right now – *Aero Blasters* is the fastest, meanest, sexiest, joypad-grippinglyest, sweatiest shoot-'em-up there's ever been.

It is more impressive-looking than most Mega Drive zappers, more innovatively designed, better off in the end-of-level boss department, and it has frighteningly fast and dangerous tunnel sections, which provide the biggest wide-eyed thrills you'll ever get from your console.

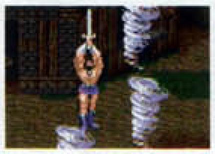
If you reckon you're a bit of a shoot-'em-up demon, you should try *Aero Blasters* on hard level and prove it, or die trying. (You may well die trying too, because once you've got into this game you'd probably rather starve than stop playing.)

MEGA says: One of the best Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups ever without the tiniest shadow of a doubt. Your game collection shouldn't be without it.

NEWS: Kemco are the programming team behind *Aero Blasters*, and they've been annoyingly quiet ever since. Unfortunately it would seem that they've turned their attention to SNES games. Come back boys!

14. GOLDEN AXE 2 (INC. GOLDEN AXE)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



What's that? You want some beat-'em-ups? OK, here's a real golden oldie (well, a game with deep roots anyway). If you're one of those strange people who likes nothing better than to wander in straight lines through strange lands kicking lumps out of the previously-happy inhabitants, then you'll probably like *Golden Axe* better than anything else in the whole wide world.

The sequel did nothing to alter the linear gameplay (Ax, Gillius or Tyris still start heading right and just keep going) and the two games are to all intents and purposes identical. It's still a simple walk-along-and-hit-fire-a-lot-whenever-you-meet-anyone kind of affair, but the execution is lovely with impressively muscular sprites and some great attacking moves. The five big levels will keep you entertained for quite a while and, while it's all very repetitive, the scenery is pretty enough to make you want to keep at it until you see the end. Whether you'll want to play it again after that is a different matter altogether.

MEGA says: The best game in a very limited genre. But why are beat-'em-ups always so easy to complete? Who knows…

NEWS: *Golden Axe 3* the coin-op is presently doing the rounds of the more select arcades, and it *kicks*. You can bet your AC adaptor that this is one game Sega will have coded, blown and freighted sharpish. Watch out for a release next spring.

15. DESERT STRIKE

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

Yes, okay, so it's in extremely poor taste, but you can't deny that *Desert Strike* is one of the most excellent pieces of blasting fun that the Mega Drive's ever played host to. Sometimes it can feel like you're fighting the entire war yourself, what with missions to complete, hundreds of enemies to blast and all manner of stuff to rescue with your helicopter's all-purpose winch. But even if you're not the xenophobic type, you'll be hard pushed not to have a great time with this atmospheric and action-packed shoot-'em-up.

MEGA says: Never mind the plotline, go out and get yourself enlisted today. *Desert Strike* is a great game, and that's the only thing that really matters.

NEWS: A sequel is on its way. Quite what it will be called, we don't know yet.

16. SPEEDBALL 2

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £34.99

And while we're on the subject of extreme violence, it doesn't come much more extreme than this. Nominally a future sports sim, *Speedball 2* is actually football meets rollerball meets bare-knuckle boxing in a frantic and immensely brutal festival of blood and guts. There's also plenty of room for skill and strategy, though, which means that for an all-round sporting experience *Speedball 2* is hard to beat (up) – especially in two-player mode.

MEGA says: Very much an arcade sports game (rather than the more tactical approach favoured by, say, *John Madden Football*), this is about as good as arcade sports games get. *Speedball 2* is totally vicious and totally excellent.

NEWS: The Bitmap Brothers (who originally wrote *Speedball* and *Speedball 2* for the home computers) have been hedging around the subject of a third generation version for some time. If it *does* finally happen, Mega Drive owners can look forward to yet more violence...

17. THUNDERFORCE 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £35.99

Of course, with *Thunderforce 4* on the way shortly, it might seem a bit ludicrous to rush out and buy this now. But if you don't, you'll be missing out on some of the best blasting mayhem this side of, er, anywhere. But not only that. You'll also be missing out on the chance to make your mates go "Woo!" at some of the best visual effects yet seen on the Mega Drive. It's not all cosmetics though – *Thunderforce 3* is also a damn fine shoot-'em-up in its own right. If you're a zapping fan, this is another one of those "must-haves", basically.

MEGA says: Gorgeous blaster which is perhaps slightly better to look at than play, but that's probably because it's so bloody wonderful to look at.

NEWS: As the man says, *Thunderforce 4* is reviewed on page 48 of this issue of MEGA. What sounds even more promising is the Mega CD version of the game, which has simultaneous two-player action…

18. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

***Revenge Of Shinobi*, the excellent follow-up to the popular arcade beat-'em-up, looks great and sounds excellent, and although you've seen the format a hundred times before, this one's so well done that you can forgive it any lack of originality.**

MEGA says: Super stuff, with top special effects and just plain special gameplay (if you can be "plain special", that is).

NEWS: *Super Shinobi 2* on the Mega CD from Sega themselves promises to feature massive digitised boss characters, swarms of bad guys and a thumpin' soundtrack. We can't wait.

19. TAZ-MANIA

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

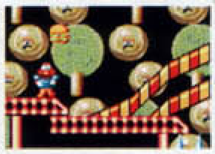
The most cartoon-like Sega game so far, *Taz-Mania* stars that lovable psychopath, the Tazmanian Devil, in a Sonic-like game of epic (in everything but game size) proportions. It's beautiful, it's hilarious, but it's also a bit repetitive and none too tough to get to the end of. If you've got a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister, though (or if you *are* a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister), this is absolutely ideal.

MEGA says: Brilliantly entertaining, but not all that demanding, *Taz-Mania* is perfect for the kids, and for those of you who can afford to spend lots of dosh on games which you'll finish in three days.

NEWS: Sega have bagged the licence to produce the official Loony Tunes game on Mega CD. What they'll do with it (exactly) remains a mystery.

20. JAMES POND 2 – ROBOCOD

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Released January 1992



Converted from, but significantly improved on, the 16-bit computer classic, *Robocod* was the game that took on *Sonic* at his own game and didn't make a half-bad stab at it. It's a little, er, spacey in bits, but for the most part this gigantic platformer is busy and impressive. Exceptionally pretty, and funny too, this is one of the best hedgehog clones you can buy.

MEGA says: Great little game, with a different feel to most platformers (largely thanks to your extendible character...). A right good laugh, and no mistake.

NEWS: *James Pond 3 – Splash Gordan* (groan) is floundering its way from the depths of EA's development teams in time for spring 1993. EA plan to make the central sprite as big as *Sonic*. We'll believe it when we see it.

21. CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Mickey Mouse, eh? Don't you just love him? No matter what he does, no matter where he goes, his little mousey ears always stay perfectly round. Yep, even when he appears in really lovely platform adventures like this one, with all manner of strange and beautiful Disney-style fantasy creatures trying to off him in a deeply unfriendly manner as he tries to rescue his sweet mouse babe from the excellently-named witch Mizrabel. What a trouper he is.

MEGA says: A lovely platform epic very much in the style of (whisper it) *Mario*, except without all that tedious head-butting palaver. Gorgeous to look at and gorgeous to play. The whole family will love this one.

NEWS: The abysmal *Fantasia* seems to have killed off any hope for a future solo Mickey Mouse outing, but *Mickey And Donald* is due for release from Sega in December.

22. DECAP ATTACK

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Decap Attack (originally released as *Magical Hat Turbo Adventure*) may at first glance make you go "yuck". But if you persist past the first 20 seconds, you'll suddenly discover that you're having a brilliant time, thanks to the rollicking platform escapades that make up this wonderfully tasteless game. Controlling a character who can chuck his proper head (his name's Chuck D Head, good eh?) and who has an extra, telescopic, head in his ribcage is simply great fun, and the cheesy music complements the gameplay perfectly.

MEGA says: Ropeyish graphics, but don't let that put you off this gorgeous and funny platformer.

NEWS: There's no news of a sequel. If you know otherwise, give us a call.

23. GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

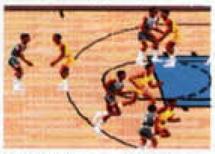
A frighteningly tough coin-op conversion, but hey, it's not as if you have to shovel money into the thing, so who cares? You certainly won't be seeing the end of this one during the same day you buy it, and that's even with infinite continues. The graphics and sound are practically flawless, as brave Sir Arthur scuttles his swathe through legions of platform-placed zombies, monsters and vultures. *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is simply one of the best arcade games around.

MEGA says: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is the business – and, for once, the tough difficulty tuning guarantees decent value for money as well as being great short-term arcade fun. Go for it!

NEWS: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is one of Japan's best-selling Mega Drive carts, but there was never a sequel to the coin-op game (itself a sequel to *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*), so we'd say there's little chance of a Mega Drive sequel.

24. LAKERS VERSUS CELTIC

Publisher: EA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



(A Scottish correspondent writes) Not *the* Celtic, surely?

MEGA says: No, it's just a rather fabby basketball game. Ah well...

NEWS: The world exclusive review of *Team USA Basketball* can be found on page 56 of this very issue of MEGA. Check out their rankings in next month's edition of the mag that brings you the best games first.

26. TOEJAM AND EARL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Speaking of multi-player action, though, it doesn't get a lot more entertaining than this. Toejam (urgh) and Earl are two of the grooviest aliens you could ask to have a close encounter with, which is part of the reason why it's such a pleasure to help them out on their quest to rebuild their crashed spaceship. The rest of the reason, though, is the superbly manic and zany action which takes place as our two heroes career around the screen, causing havoc wherever they go. After a few plays, the lower levels tend to drag a bit (there's no password option), but this game is both original and insane. You'll love it.

MEGA says: Another okay game which becomes completely essential when played with someone else. Got any friends? Buy this. Haven't got any friends? Buy this and make some.

NEWS: *Toejam and Earl 2* was due to reach the UK before Christmas. Sega HQ is, however, getting more like Heathrow in the fog every week, with delay after delay sending release schedules way out of whack. But we're not downhearted.

25. POPULOUS

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Immensely strange and original God-simulator game in which you hold sway over the very shape of the land itself, as you try to create an army of followers to defeat an opposing deity. Slightly forbidding at first with a mass of controls to get the hang of, but once you're in, you'll probably never want to come back out.

MEGA says: One of the most compulsive games ever invented. There's nothing else like it on the Mega Drive so, egomaniacs everywhere, don't miss it.

NEWS: The more-of-the-same-but-still-high-quality sequel is presently being worked on by Virgin Games. Expect more news (probably Mega CD-related) before Christmas.

27. PIT FIGHTER

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £37.99

Ooh look, it's another beat-'em-up. Ah yes, but wait... this one's different. How come? Well, it's got digitised graphics, guv. That means the fighters you take on in this simulation of that ugliest of "sports" (pit fighting, that is) look incredibly realistic, which means you can imagine that it's a real human being you're knocking the living daylights out of. You sad person.

MEGA says: Pretty dull and morally dubious beat-'em-up fare. You won't find much prettier BEUs, but gameplay-wise you could do a lot better than this.

NEWS: If *Streetfighter 2* ever makes it to the Mega CD (and things are still up in the air), then it will be the only serious opposition to *Pitfighter 2* on the Mega CD from Tengen, due for release sometime in '93. Oh yes, one more thing... Domark (kind souls that they are) are giving away a coin-op as a welcome gift to MEGA! See page 98.

28. SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A mammoth, gorgeous RPG (as opposed to a gorgeous mammoth RPG, which would be a completely different proposition involving attractive elephants, wouldn't it?) with lovely aesthetics and gameplay which will keep you entranced for months. *Shining In The Darkness* is probably the Mega Drive's most accessible RPG, so comes highly recommended to anyone who fancies giving the genre a try.

MEGA says: A bit of a must for RPG fans, but even if you're not into the genre, give this a try. You might find that you're pleasantly surprised.

NEWS: We'll say it again... start saving for a Mega CD.

29. PHANTASY STAR 2

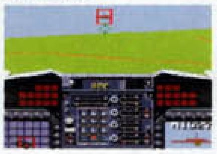
Publisher: Sega
Price: £59.99
Not quite as big and sexy as *Phantasy Star 3*, obviously, but pretty damn impressive all the same.

MEGA says: Great stuff, but at this price it's strictly for the absolute fanatics.

NEWS: Do the initials MCD mean anything to you yet?

30. F-22 INTERCEPTOR

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



There aren't many flight simulators around on the Mega Drive, which, to be honest, is most of the reason why this is the best one. The graphics are fab, but the gameplay gets repetitive a bit too quickly for our liking.

MEGA says: If you want a flight sim, this is about as good as they currently get. Luckily Microprose has some fantastic up, down, flying around, looping-the-loop-type stuff in the pipeline.

NEWS: EA was very proud of *F22 Interceptor*, so it used a lot of the same techniques in *LHX Attack Chopper* (reviewed on page 44). You can bet that they'll use the same code in the future for something. Flight sim fans can almost certainly look forward to *F19 Stealth Fighter* or *F15 Strike Eagle* (truly a *classic* ATA missile-'em-up) *if* Microprose can get a deal hashed out with Sega.

31. STRIDER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

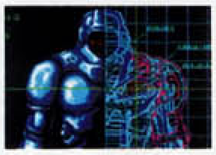
Amazing graphics, superb sound, lovely animation and some of the biggest and baddest enemies you'll ever meet, are the ingredients of *Strider*. Pretty simplistic platform-leaping beat-'em-up is the order of the day here, but *Strider* does it better than most, and it does it looking better than almost anything. Oh yeah, and the "running down the side of a mountain" sequence is just about worth the money by itself. Lovely.

MEGA says: You'll finish it in two days, but if you want something which will show your friends the power of the Mega Drive, this is the game (second to only *Sonic*) that'll make them go "gosh, wow" the most.

NEWS: *Strider 2* is on its way (developed by US Gold) but word is that it's not up to the standard of the original. We'll have to wait and see...

32. ESWAT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Released April 1991



Bearing only the slightest resemblance to the coin-op of the same name, *ESWAT* luckily manages to be an even better game than its arcade counterpart. It's got a bit more to it than the coin-op's limited beat-'em-up formula, and although it's still no *Sword Of Vermillion*, there's just about enough thinking to keep you interested to the end.

MEGA says: There are literally dozens of this type of game around, but this is one of the relatively few which are actually worth having. Pretty simplistic, but still involving and addictive.

NEWS: Nothing much to report from the boys at Enhanced Special Weapons And Tactics. Guess they're all dunking donuts or something...

Turn over

33. SHADOW DANCER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

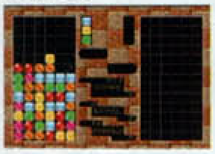
ESWAT with a dog, basically.

MEGA says: More fab scrolling beat-'em-up action, and you'll find yourself getting really attached to your little ninja pooch, too. The baddies are truly bad and the ninja scum that Joe's fighting against put up a decent enough fight. There are plenty of secret bonuses and hidden goodies to keep the interest factor up. Well worth a bang – check it out.

NEWS: No news of a sequel. Ninja fans should check out *Revenge Of Shinobi*.

34. COLUMNS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The game they give away with the Game Gear, and it's easy to see why – it's worth buying one of the fabby little machines just to play this, except, of course, you don't have to. This brilliant cross between *Tetris* and *Klax* is better on the Mega Drive than anywhere else, thanks mainly to the fact that the graphics are big enough to let you actually see what's going on. Great stuff solo, but the two-player head-to-head "flash" game is very competitive and totally wonderful. The best Mega Drive puzzle game going.

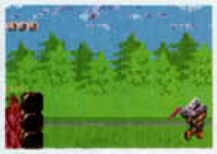
MEGA says: Buy another joypad, buy *Columns*, and then invite some of your friends round. Then see if you can get them to leave...

NEWS: Puzzle games are peculiar releases. They just seem to turn up every now and then. For real brain boxes, *Trivial Pursuit* on cart from Domark, followed by a Mega CD version, should keep you satisfied.

Alternatively, you could always try learning astro-physics or developing a unified theory for everything. Show some initiative, apply those braincells and you could be the next Einstein! Hmm.

35. KID CHAMELEON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Ultra-cute platform thang with lots of really neat touches, but it's too easy and not all that exciting. Sega hyped this game almost as much as *Sonic*, so they must have been a bit disappointed with its lack-lustre performance sales-wise. The game isn't at all bad, and remember – you don't have to be great to be good.

MEGA says: Not too bad, just don't listen to Sega.

NEWS: A sequel has got to appear sooner or later, but so far we've heard no definite news.

36. TERMINATOR

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99

You're really enjoying yourself, you're marvelling at the lush graphics, you're being blown away by the non-stop all-action platform shoot-'em-up gameplay, you're blasting through the fourth level and... er, then you finish it. That's it then, eh?

MEGA says: Lovely game, but there's not nearly enough of it.

NEWS: *Terminator 2* on cartridge is coming from Flying Edge next year in full *Operation Wolf*-style comin'-at-ya, shoot-'em-up glory. The Mega CD version will feature stills from the film and yet more samples.

37. TWO CRUDE DUDES

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

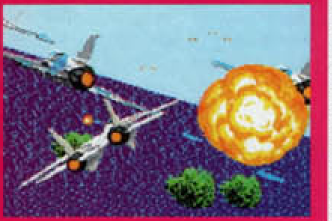
Well, it's a beat-'em-up and it's got some crude dudes in it. Er...

MEGA says: A fairly accurate version of the coin-op *Crude Busters* and it's OK. The whole game looks good and plays OK but it's just too easy to finish.

NEWS: *Two Crude Dudes 2* (a bit of a mouthful that one) is almost complete and will soon be ready for import.

38. AFTERBURNER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The arcade version of *Afterburner* (all style and no content) threw the player and his lunch all around a hydraulic cockpit while simultaneously flinging huge graphics at the screen so fast that all you could do was wrench the joystick around wildly, keep your finger locked on the trigger and hope desperately for the best. Mega Drive *Afterburner* recreates the feel of the coin-op perfectly, except that you'll have to get someone to come round and jiggle your chair for you while you play. What else is there to say?

MEGA says: Er, this, I suppose. *Afterburner 2* (ie *Afterburner*) is excellent short-term blasting, but it's thinner than gold plating on a window, and there are plenty other shoot-'em-ups that'll give you bigger thrills.

NEWS: Need-for-speed freaks can look forward to an arcade-perfect (ish), 12MB version of G-Loc due for take-off in December. Meanwhile, *Afterburner 3* on Mega CD is hot favourite to be launched with the hardware itself just before Christmas. Will it kick? Bet your ass.

For the more serious flight fan, *MiG 29* from Domark and the likely release of *F19 Stealth Fighter* and/or *F15 Strike Eagle* from Microprose should keep you happy.

39. BUCK ROGERS "COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY"

Publisher: EA
Price: £49.99

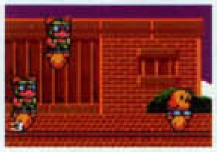
Tacky graphics but tons of depth in this strategic RPG thing. But where's Tweaky?

MEGA says: Very nice, but wouldn't it have been better to use the licence for a good old-fashioned shoot-'em-up?

NEWS: No, *Buck Rogers* was just a one-off. But in a similar(ish) vein *Star Trek: The Next Generation* from Sega themselves, is pencilled in for a Mega CD release sometime next year.

40. NEW ZEALAND STORY

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



Another classic coin-op that's seen incarnations on just about every format imaginable, but the Mega Drive version takes an unexpected twist by being less of a conversion than a rearrangement of the original. All the same features found in the arcade game are present and correct, but the level layouts and structures are almost completely different. While this is a bit of a bummer for arcade perfectionists, it means that *New Zealand Story* fans now have a whole new game to play, and that can't be a bad thing.

MEGA says: *New Zealand Story* on the Mega Drive is as cute, clever and addictive as it ever was, so who cares if all the bits are in different places? Not us, that's for sure.

NEWS: There was never a sequel, but Master System owners are getting their first look at *Kiri the Kiwi* (courtesy of Tecmagik) next month.

41. TRUXTON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Shoot-'em-up, huh? Vertical scrolling, huh? Bit easy to beat, isn't it?

MEGA says: Well yes, but on the whole Truxton is a decent enough effort. It's good fun to pick up and play every now and again, but it'll never change your life, or even give you one especially wonderful evening. Ho-hum.

NEWS: No sequel, no news. If you know different, give us a call.

42. OLYMPIC GOLD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99

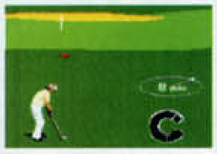
The graphics may be lush, but at the root of it all, it's just a creative way to pummel the living daylights out of your joypad. This is a great game for frustrated athletes.

MEGA says: Pretty dull by yourself, but excellent fun when you've got a few mates round.

NEWS: Bit of a one-off really, but Sega have seen fit to bundle the game with all Mega Drives sold in the shops. Expect the inevitable sequel in four years time.

43. WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £37.99
Released July 1992



Well, it's pretty good, but it's not really *PGA Tour*, now is it?

MEGA says: No it isn't. Unless you're absolutely golf loopy nuts and just *have* to have every available sim, get *PGA* and settle for that.

NEWS: (See *PGA Tour Golf*.) There are a number of very good-looking golf games at various points along the pipeline, we'll keep you informed.

44. BATTLE SQUADRON

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

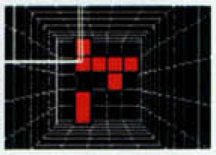
Amiga conversion time again, but this vertically-scrolling blaster looked pretty dated even when it originally appeared about two years ago, and it hasn't really improved with age. Good solid zapping action, but nothing to really hold your attention.

MEGA says: Bog-standard vertical zaperama with little or nothing to make it stand out from the crowd. More repetitive than most.

NEWS: EA don't go in for shoot-'em-ups as a rule, so there's nothing similar to look forward to from the same stable. Shame.

45. BLOCKOUT

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99



Your brain will never forgive you. Imagine *Tetris*, played looking down a well, with three-dimensional vector-graphic wire-frame blocks which can be moved, turned and rotated in each of the three axes. Having problems imagining it? Just you try playing it, mate.

MEGA says: Complete mind torture, but if you're a professional mathematician or more laid back than a particularly relaxed sloth, you'll get some serious puzzling fun out of this one. Strictly for the hardy, though.

NEWS: Pat Sharp (Capital Radio jock and professional long-haired, grinning person) is a big fan of *Blockout*, for what it's worth.

46. F1 CIRCUS

Publisher: Nichibutsu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

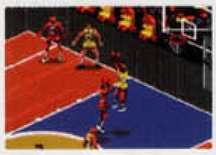
Second only to the *Super Monaco GP* twins, *F1 Circus* looks ropey but plays well. The Formula One tie-in is well implemented and playing the game makes a fairly realistic representation of putting you in the cockpit of the real thing. In other words, you'll crash a lot.

MEGA says: If realism gets your motor running (even if it's at the expense of lush graphics), then check this out.

NEWS: *Formula One Grand Prix* from Microprose *may* appear early in '93. But we're not allowed to say anything or else we'll get sued. OK, so everyone, here goes: *Formula One Grand Prix* from Microprose WILL DEFINITELY NOT be out next year (wink). Got that? Good.

47. DAVID ROBINSON BASKETBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



The best of a whole clutch of basketball games recently released by various people. Though still not up to *Lakers vs Celtics*, this one boasts by far the smoothest, fastest action, and some of the nicest effects too. If basketball's your bag (ahem), this is your kind of shopping trolley. (What? – Ed.)

MEGA says: Bouncy bouncy, bouncy bouncy, fun, fun, fun, fun, fun. (What? – Ed.) Tiggers. And basketballs. (Ah – Ed.)

NEWS: David Robinson was a one-off really, but basketball fans should go to page 56 for MEGA's world-exclusive review of EASN's *Team USA Basketball*.

48. SUPER HANG-ON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99

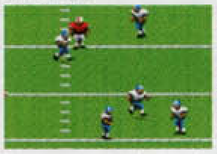
Road Rash, without all the violence. Yes, we know it sounds like a bit of a bad idea, but if what you're after is pure high-speed racing thrills, then this is still your best bet. A near-perfect rendition of the coin-op, too – just try to stop yourself from leaning into those bends...

MEGA says: It looks lovely, it plays beautifully, it'll last for ever. Along with *Super Monaco* and *Road Rash*, the only genuinely essential racing game for your Mega Drive.

NEWS: Wot a barg! *Super Hang-On* is one of the first seven Sega games to be re-released at a special bargain price. For the full range of Sega's cheapies (and we're not just talking about price, either) as well as news of what could turn out to be the next batch of cut-price bargs, go to page 58. It's just possible you could save yourself a fortune.

50. JOE MONTANA 2 - SPORTS TALK FOOTBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Nope, sorry, even this sequel to the original "not too bad but let's face it, it's not as good as *John Madden*" American football game fails to lace the boots or plump the padding of the boy from Electronic Arts. Nice try (the talking is great for the first couple of hours) but no cigar.

MEGA says: It's not as good as *John Madden Football* but it talks to you. Perfect for gridiron fanatics with no friends.

NEWS: So far, we've had only *Joe Montana 2 – Sports Talk Football* and now this. You can bet that Sega will use their sports talk technology again in the future.

MORE NEWS: *Joe Montana NFL Football* will feature genuine NFL players and live video footage of the man himself chalk-boarding plays and analysing your game. But will they stick to the side-viewed pitch? Or will Sega swallow their pride and admit that the *Madden*-angle works better?

51. FIGHTING MASTERS

Publisher: Treco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Solid two-player beat-'em-up action is the name of this lovely looking game. If only the beast was a bit more substantial in one-player mode.

MEGA says: Two-player pommelling can be a great laugh (especially with 12 intergalactic hard cases to play with), but don't bother with *Fighting Masters* if you're a solo scrapper.

NEWS: Treco's next project is *Breach* in which you're in charge of a crew of 20 intergalactic hard cases. Treco like their intergalactic hard cases, don't they?

52. CHUCK ROCK

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99

Unga bunga! Or something like that, anyway. This is an old Amiga game which has been brushed up a bit for the Mega Drive and, as you might expect, it's a bit of a lush looker. What you might not expect is a fabby prehistoric platform game which plays like an episode of The Flintstones (except it's funnier) and in which you dispose of your enemies by bouncing them off your gigantic beer belly. Nope, you might not expect that, but it's what you'll get anyway. Ha.

MEGA says: A really enjoyable platformer, packed to the brim with variation, lovely little touches and more imagination than a dozen lesser efforts in this overloaded genre. Almost as delectable as Wilma Flintstone's bottom.

NEWS: There was never a *Chuck Rock 2* on the Amiga, so there's no reason to expect one for the Mega Drive. But did somebody mention The Flintstones? Well a game of that name is a *lot* more likely. Just one more trivial snippet: Sega Japan made Virgin take out the sequence in the original game in which Chuck has to time his dash under the rear end of a giant brontosaurus... Spoil sports.

53. TETRIS

Publisher: (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

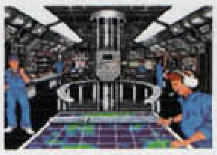
Okay, hands up everyone who doesn't know about *Tetris*. Three of you, eh? Well, pay attention this time. Tsch.

MEGA says: The biggest and sexiest puzzle game of all eternity comes to the Mega Drive. If, by some incredibly unlikely fluke, you don't already have a *Tetris* game, then get this one now. Either that or you'll have to buy a Game Boy...

NEWS: Russian, Vadim Gerasimov was an 18-year-old student when he wrote the original *Tetris* game. What he's doing now, we haven't the faintest idea.

54. 688 ATTACK SUB

Publisher: SEGA
Price: £34.99



Nice, atmospheric submarine simulator with a bit of zapping and some pleasant aesthetics. It's still a submarine game though, isn't it?

MEGA says: PING!... Not the kind of thing you ever PING!... imagine anybody buying a Mega PING!... Drive for, but good at what it does, in a vaguely damp kind of way.

NEWS: Sorry sub fans. Underwater fun is still limited to this game or bath time. Still, *Super Battle Tank: War in the Gulf* from Absolute Entertainment is due to be converted from SNES to Mega Drive and that's *kind* of the same thing (ish).

55. STAR CONTROL

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99

Massive but not actually all that complicated (it's just a souped-up version of the coin-op game called *Space Wars*) space strategy trading thing with zappy and tactical bits thrown in as a life-preserver.

MEGA says: A bit of a lark with a chum if you're after something different, but kinda dull if you're on your own.

NEWS: At the time of going to press, the row between Sega and Accolade (Ballistic's parent company) still hasn't been finally sorted. Sega says: Ballistic never had an official licence to produce games for Sega's machine. Ballistic says: Yeah, well, Sega is operating restrictive practices and, anyway, washing powder manufacturers don't have to get Zannusi's permission to sell their stuff do they? MEGA says: Just give us the games...

49. ARCUS ODYSSEY

Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

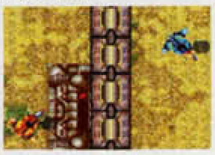
A lovely looking 3D game, which scores points for offering some of the best simultaneous two-player action going.

MEGA says: We like two-player games, and so *Arcus Odyssey* is OK by us.

NEWS: *Thunder Storm* on Mega CD (featuring 25 minutes of animation) and *Grandslam Tennis '93* for the Mega Drive spearhead Renovation's latest batch of releases.

56. HERZOG ZWEI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



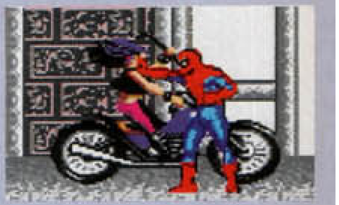
Eight-way scrolling, view-from-above, simultaneous two-player, head-to-head, split-screen shoot- and think-'em-up with bags of strategy. It could have been a classic, but didn't quite manage to hang together. What a shame.

MEGA says: Almost excellent for two-player head-to-head. If you can pick it up cheap, you may love it.

NEWS: *Herzog Zwei* is German for "two generals", or something like that anyway.

57. SPIDERMAN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



"Spiderman, Spiderman, does whatever a spider can." So how come you never see him getting trapped in a bath then, eh?

MEGA says: Pretty run-of-the-mill platform game, lifted out of the ordinary by some pretty spiffy graphics and a nice line in enemies. Still only really for web-slinging fanatics and the Manic Street Preachers (evidently they're big fans) though.

NEWS: More Marvel superheroes appearing in Sega video games? *Captain America and the Avengers* from Data East is due for release in the US this month. Two-player simultaneous play and coin-op graphics make this game set for a big success. Check out your local dealer.

58. CORPORATION

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99

Gigantic and tough 3D, RPG-ish Amiga conversion with some top 3D blasting bits in it. The idea is that you're a secret agent briefed with the unenviable job of trying to establish whether rumours of a company creating killer genetic mutants is true or not. It's involving and absorbing although it can get a bit repetitive if constantly creeping around mutant-infested buildings inches from death, isn't your idea of a good night out.

MEGA says: For RPG fun with a bit more blasting *and* a bit more brain-stretching than usual, this is a pretty damn good buy.

NEWS: Now this is hot, but decidedly dodgy, legal-wise news. Still, what the hell? All the MEGA team could use a long holiday, so let's go.

Germany-based ID Software have made some excellent games for the PC, the jewel in the floppy crown being a gob-smacking 3D shoot/adventure-'em-up (à la Corporation) named *Wolfenstein*. After seeing this game in action, Sega *allegedly* liked it so much that they jumped on the phone (in true Remmington shavers fashion) and offered to buy the whole company. If this alleged takeover bid is successful, then *Wolfenstein* will be an obvious Mega Drive release. Stay tuned, all corporate takeover fans.

59. TEST DRIVE 2

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £34.99

A two-player, head-to-head driving game that sounds as if it should be great, but somehow never lives up to expectations.

MEGA says: Enjoyable serious-ish, two-player driving/crashing game, which you may never be able to buy. Life's a bitch, eh?

NEWS: Sega have made their name with arcade drive-'em-ups. Expect *Rad Mobile* (complete with *Sonic The Hedgehog* mirror-dangler) in full Mega CD glory sometime next year. Also, *Road Riot 4WD* from Tengen is the coin-op con that looks set to keep driving fans happy.

Turn over

TOP 100

60. TROUBLE SHOOTER

Publisher: Vic Tokai (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Madison and Crystal take to the skies to kick some alien butt in an entertaining shoot-'em-up with a choice of five special weapons, some seriously whacked-out bosses and five levels of constant action.

MEGA says: A tad too small and a tad too easy, but while it lasts, *Trouble Shooter* is right good stuff.

NEWS: Neil got this game six months before everyone else through a well dodgy friend of his in Japan. There's more on the way too...

61. ARNOLD PALMER TOURNAMENT GOLF

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Released February 1991

More golf? Haven't we covered that one already? Of "course" we have! (Another joke like that and you're fired. I'm not joking – Ed.)

MEGA says: *PGA Tour's* the game you want.

NEWS: We've covered all the golfing news already.

62. GAMES – THE WINTER CHALLENGE

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99

Pretty run-of-the-mill snowbound sports sim with eight ice-tastic events. As ever, lots of laughs with your buddies, but a real snoozeathon if you try it solo.

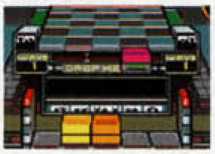
MEGA says: This one's been kind of overtaken by *Olympic Gold* as the Mega Drive's première multi-event sports game, but it's still a good example of the genre. It's just not a particularly outstanding genre, is all.

One claim to fame that *Games* can cling to as its own, however, is that it is Ballistic's best ever game. Hooray!

NEWS: So, is Eddy "the eagle" Edwards any good at winter games, or what? It's a question that the MEGA team feels should be asked...

63. KLAX

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £34.99



A massive coin-op cult (ie hardly anyone played it but everyone who did, loved it to bits), *Klax* is one of the best puzzle games ever. Unlike *Tetris* et al, you get a bit of scope for your own strategies instead of just needing lightning reactions, although you'll have to have those too. Very original and excellently designed, with a groovy two-player head-to-head game to boot, *Klax* will test your speed, sight, and spatial perception, all at the same time. Can you handle it?

MEGA says: *Columns, Tetris, Blockout* and *Klax* – the only puzzle games you'll ever need. Geniuses shouldn't be without any of them.

NEWS: Don't buy the Japanese import version – the control method stinks. Stick to the official release or US import version and you'll be OK.

64. JAMES POND

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

The prequel to *Robocod*, but a more inferior game. Some cute platform/swimming around fun, but nothing that'll really set your head on fire. Er, not that you'd especially want it to.

MEGA says: The 12 levels won't last you too long, and you'll probably get a bit bored before the end, anyway. This is, however, still good fun for a few plays.

NEWS: *James Pond 3 – Splash Gordan* is due to be released in the spring.

66. DARIUS 2

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Seven different endings? Now this is a way of extending a game's lifespan. This classy sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-up offers enough to earn it a place in the Top 100, but it doesn't quite break any new ground.

MEGA says: Nice graphics, nice sound, nice challenge – but nothing new whatsoever. An above-average sideways-scroller that's worth a look.

NEWS: *Hit the Ice* from Taitio brings the smash-hit ice hockey coin-op to your Mega Drive in December. Will it be up to *EA Hockey '93*? MEGA's money says no.

67. MIGHT AND MAGIC

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

Drastically over-expensive, dated control interface, and crap graphics, but this is still a deep and absorbing RPG. You can, however, do much better for your money.

MEGA says: This one's past its prime, to be honest.

NEWS: Do RPG's really light up your Christmas tree? If we get enough people asking, then MEGA intend to run a *big* feature about them. Let us know what you think.

68. CALIFORNIA GAMES

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Half-pipe skateboarding, foot-bag, roller-skating, surfing and BMXing: those Californians sure know how to have a great time, don't they? This multi-event game is a lot of fun to get into, but there's no real long-term appeal.

MEGA says: Put the £40 in a bank account for about fifty years at 12% interest, then go to the USA yourself. Sorted.

NEWS: If you reckon that multi-event carts are a real barg (and some people do), then take a look at *The Aquatic Games* on page 52.

69. BUDOKAN

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

Martial arts-type beat-'em-up, which requires a little more thought than most. At the end of the day, it's still a lot of wiggling the joypad, hitting the buttons and hoping for the best, though.

MEGA says: If beating computer people up (in four different "sporting" events), is where you get your thrills, this is one of the less brain-rotting ways in which you can go about it.

NEWS: *Street Fighter 2*. It would be nice wouldn't it? Still no concrete news though.

65. THE IMMORTAL

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

Massive but ropey-looking RPG with loads of blood 'n' guts for the gore-thirsty. Very slick but ultimately insubstantial. Ah well!

MEGA says: OK, but think very carefully before you blow £40 on it.

NEWS: Will Harvery is EA's man responsible for *The Immortal*, and MEGA can confirm that he is currently beavering away on a sequel – although it may look nothing like the original.

70. ZERO WING

Publisher: SEGA
Price: £34.99

Of all the millions of horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-ups for the Mega Drive, *Zero Wing* is probably, er, the easiest. You'll finish this within three attempts, which is a bit of a shame as it's otherwise about as good as the genre gets. Lots of nice big aliens, smooth and precise control, and decent weaponry make it lots of fun to play, but there's not much point when you've already finished it!

MEGA says: A really lovely, playable shoot-'em-up, but way, way too easy for all but the most unco-ordinated.

NEWS: *Thunderforce 4* has got to be the best news this year for sideways-scrolling fans. Check out our review on page 48.

71. THUNDERFORCE 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Basically, *Thunderforce 3* with some different scrolling bits, but not quite as good.

MEGA says: Okay, but why bother with this when there's *Thunderforce 3* (or *Thunderforce 4* for that matter) out there? Or *Aero Blasters* or *Hellfire*, come to that.

NEWS: *Thunderforce 4 is reviewed on page 48.*

72. TURRICAN

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99

A supremely popular home computer game, but maybe that just shows how easy all those Amiga and ST owners are to please. *Turrican* is an absolutely colossal platform-leaping, shoot-'em-upping, landscape-exploring, epic of a game. But after a while you start thinking, "Oh good, another 100 screens to plough through before I get to the next interesting bit. I wouldn't mind, but they're exactly the same as the last 100 screens".

MEGA says: It's decent enough for a while, but if you've got the patience or the high boredom threshold needed to get to the end, you're a better man than any of us.

NEWS: *Turrican 2 was* going to be released this summer from Ballistic under the name of *Universal Soldier*. In other words, Accolade picked up the licence of the Van Damme/Lungren block-wobbler but didn't have time to create a new game. One quick front-end tweaking later saw *Turrican 2* in its new identity, and the unsuspecting public would have been none the wiser (except MEGA would have told you, teehee). Whether it will ever appear or not, remains in the hands of the courts.

73. EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99

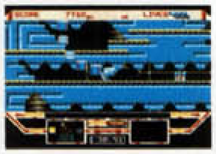
This football game was previously seen on home computer formats as the extremely popular *Manchester United Europe*. The fact that it is now the best Mega Drive football game around isn't so much down to it being brilliant, but because there are only about two competitors, both of which are rubbish. Still, this is slick, fast and enjoyable, and although it's easy to beat, you'll get months of fun from the two-player mode. Well worth a look for footy fans.

MEGA says: The undisputed Mega Drive soccer king, but that title will probably go out of the window when Mega Drive's *Kick Off* makes an appearance. Wait for that and then make your own judgement.

NEWS: *Super Kick-Off* from US Gold should be the Mega Drive footy game we've deserved for so long. *If* they don't try and fart around with the graphics and gameplay, they cannot fail. But (unfortunately) that's a bloody great "if".

74. FATAL REWIND

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



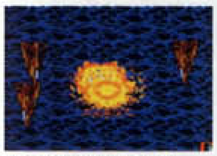
You may know this re-titled computer-game classic better as *The Killing Game Show*. It's like *Rainbow Islands* in many ways, but with big butch metallic graphics and a little bit more to think about like how impressive the interactive action replay feature is. There's no more going back miles when you get killed either — you just watch your last performance then take over a split second before you made that last silly mistake. Excellently compulsive platforming fun.

MEGA says: If you fancy something a bit different from the ordinary cutesy-graphics formula stuff that is most Mega Drive platform games (and who doesn't from time to time?), then *Fatal Rewind* could be the game for you.

NEWS: Originally programmed by Psygnosis for the home computers, *The Killing Game Show* was one of the first of (what is now) a large catalogue of great games. But have they got a licence to produce Mega Drive games? You can bet that they're working on it – MEGA will keep its ear to the ground.

75. SUPER AIRWOLF

Publisher: Kyugu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



Super Airwolf is known as *Crossfire* in the US and that should be enough to tell you that this game's got absolutely nowt to do with *Airwolf* – it's just an old vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up with a new name stuck on it for a quick licence to cash-in. Fortunately, it's quite a good old vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up, but it's still nothing you haven't seen a dozen times before.

MEGA says: One of the best efforts in the vertical-blasting genre, but only worthwhile if you don't already have half-a-dozen of the blighters. Groovy soundtrack though.

NEWS: No news from Kyugu or Japan of any other products. But as soon as any of their programmers even so much as look at a Mega Drive, MEGA will let you know.

76. EL VIENTO

Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

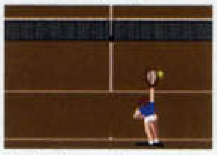
What do you expect to hear about yet another bog-standard platform beat-'em-up? That the name means "The Double-Decker Bus" in Spanish? That'd be interesting, wouldn't it? If only it were true…

MEGA says: Not true, though. Yet another bog-standard beat-'em-up. Sorry.

NEWS: *Thunder Storm* on Mega CD (featuring 25 minutes of animation) and *Grandslam Tennis '93* for the Mega Drive spearhead Renovation's latest batch of releases.

77. GRAND SLAM TENNIS

Publisher: Telenet (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



Good fun in two-player mode, but severely limited for a solo outing. We could describe this mediocre tennis game as a load of balls, but that would be a tad harsh, so we won't.

MEGA says: Unfortunately, this is the Mega Drive's only tennis game but it really isn't anything special. But…

NEWS: *Jennifer Capriati's Grandslam Tennis '93* from Renovation is due out soon. Also Tecmagik (the force behind some highly successful Master System games) make their Mega Drive debut with *André Agassi's Tennis* in the spring. Stay calm, tennis (and hairy belly-button) fans. MEGA will try and bag you the exclusive review.

78. ROLLING THUNDER 2

Publisher: Namco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

The original *Rolling Thunder* was a fantastic coin-op, and *Rolling Thunder 2* on the Mega Drive is a fair copy. But the sprite movement is severely limited, letting down what could have been a great, basic platform-shooting game.

MEGA says: Not bad at all, but not in the same league as *Revenge Of Shinobi* et al.

NEWS: No news of *Rolling Thunder 3* yet, but *James Bond* from Domark (previewed on page 27) looks set to have a similar feel.

79. JEWEL MASTER

Publisher: SEGA
Price: £34.99

This is a platformer which has some nice touches of originality (wearing different combinations of rings creates different special weapons), but you don't have to use any of the clever stuff in order to finish it inside two days. Insanely easy and not very exciting.

MEGA says: Not really a jewel, more of a decanter set.

NEWS: The same Sega programmers who are responsible for *Jewel Master* also take the credit for *Alisia Dragoon*: both are near-misses because their novel ideas were not implemented to maximum benefit. Third time lucky eh boys?

80. TALMIT'S ADVENTURE (MARVEL LAND)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Super-cutesy platforming action, like *Sonic The Hedgehog* with more primary colours. It looks - fabulous and plays better than it looks, so why don't you go out and get it?

MEGA says: One of the best platformers around, and one of the few games which can lure girls to your joypad too.

NEWS: After years of being available only on grey import, this has just been released officially from Sega. Why did it take so long? And how can they seriously slag off people who buy imports when they behave in such a stupid manner? It's beyond us…

81. BATMAN

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

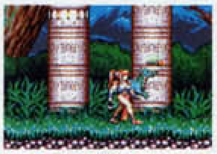
Nothing massively (or even tinily) original here, just lots of wandering around Bat-platforms and Bat-mazes beating up Bat-opponents. There's plenty of Bat-action but really not that many thrills.

MEGA says: Not bad, in fact really quite good. But, y'know, if you're *really* after a Batman game on the Mega Drive…

NEWS: …then wait for *Batman Returns*, due for official release in November. The Mega CD *Batman* game will feature video stills and animation from the film, making it one of the first true multi-media games. Word is that the CD version will run twice as fast as the cartridge version with a full driving level, a Batski level and even some extra secret bonus levels. But will it star Michelle Pfeiffer?

82. ALISIA DRAGOON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



That's what we haven't had in a platform game yet, dragons!

MEGA says: Er, the best dragon-based platform game around. Probably.

NEWS: The MEGA news desk is constantly buzzing with incoming faxes, telephone calls and letters. But, we can categorically state that we've heard nothing about any more games with dragons. And that's official.

83. BONANZA BROS.

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Robo and Mobo set out on a night of breaking and entering in this two-player coin-op con. It's all quite fun and the idea is clever, but the arcade version never made enough of the two-player interaction so there was never any hope of the Mega Drive version being any better.

MEGA says: Limited two-player fun and don't attempt a one-player game.

NEWS: Robo and Mobo are hopefully in prison. They deserve to be.

84. GYNOUG

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Ha, so you thought this was just another horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up. No sirree. This one's got a sillier name. Look!

MEGA says: Alright, alright, so Gynoug's quite good in a small and fiddly kinda way. But if you've got this far, you should already have at least five better blasters, so why spend another £40 on this 'un?

NEWS: Also known as Wings of Wor (sic) on US import.

85. FORGOTTEN WORLDS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

This is a very faithful clone of the coin-op of the same name, except that the Mega Drive doesn't have the rotating-knob controller which allowed you to fire in eight directions independently of movement. Inconveniently, that was pretty much the crux of the arcade game, but apart from that (er...) this does a pretty respectable job of recreating the coin-op experience.

MEGA says: Pity it wasn't a very good coin-op then, isn't it?

NEWS: Hot favourite for a drop to £19.99, this one. Scoop the full story on page 58.

86. M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Battlezone for the nineties as you trundle around a fast-moving landscape, blasting an impressively wide range of enemies over loads and loads of top tank-based combat missions. This game is ideal for anyone who ever wished they'd been born a tuna.

MEGA says: Entertaining war sim that's a deal livelier than you might expect. Different and fun.

NEWS: *Super Battle Tank: War in the Gulf* from Absolute Entertainment is due to be converted from SNES to Mega Drive sometime soon

87. SPACE HARRIER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Space Harrier was one of the first arcade games to get the hydraulic-chair, oh-my-god-and-hello-Mr-Breakfast treatment. And without this fancy machinery, the game underneath lacks something. *Everyone* knows what *Space Harrier* was about. And this is exactly the same.

MEGA says: Some lovely scrolling and occasionally some truly excellent scrolling. And lots of shooting.

NEWS: *Bimini Run* from Nuvision is a 3D *Space Harrier*-style dodge-'em-up, except this time you're in a power boat. Plus ça change…

88. SPACE INVADERS '91

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Not the same game as the fabby *Super Space Invaders* on the Master System, *Space Invaders '90* is a strange "updating" of the first-ever coin-op shoot-'em-up. It's a lot faster and a lot zappier, with some neat power-ups and tough new baddies (and no defence bases!), but somehow it just doesn't capture the classy atmosphere of the original. You'd be better off with a Power Base Converter and the Master System version of *Super Space Invaders*, to be honest.

MEGA says: Fun for a while, and the contoured-ground effects are nice, but really you'd need to have a lot of money to burn to think about buying this.

NEWS: We weren't joking about the Power Base Converter y'know. It's an add-on which is well worth considering.

89. HARDBALL

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99

Baseball from Ballistic.

MEGA says: It's another baseball game, but it's not as good as *Sports Talk Baseball*. And one baseball game should be enough for anyone really, don't you think? And it's not going to be this one – if that's not labouring the point. (And since

Turn over

it's by Ballistic, you're probably not going to be able to buy it even if you want to). So there.

NEWS: *Sports Talk Baseball*, that's the game for you. Check out the review on page 54.

90. RAMBO 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Lots of view-from-above, brain-dead blasting (what did you expect), but not a lot more.

MEGA says: Sort of like *Gauntlet* meets, er, *Rambo*. Only more violent, and less complicated.

NEWS: *Gauntlet* on Mega Drive is on its way!

91. MOONWALKER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Side-on version of the impressive-looking isometric 3D coin-op in which our-man-Michael has to rescue scores of tedious, nauseating kiddies from the evil Mr Big. They all squeal "Michael" when they're rescued which makes it worse.

Average kinda platform thing really, but the way Michael (Jackson, for it is he) dances whole screens of baddies to death with a quick "Ow!" is completely excellent.

MEGA says: Not bad, not bad, not really, really bad, but not much of a thriller either. (Sorry about that, by the way. It won't happen again.)

NEWS: A Mega CD version has got to happen for no other reason than Sega would give *anything* for some more shots of MJ playing Sega. Marketing – don't you just love it?

92. KING'S BOUNTY

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

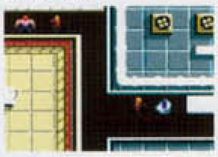
Enjoyable and accessible RPG but, after the first half-an-hour, you'll pretty much have seen everything it's got to offer. Good for beginners, though.

MEGA says: For complete novices or real RPG diehards only – the casual player will get restless after a while.

NEWS: Definitely no sequel. And EA are unanimous in that.

93. CRACKDOWN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



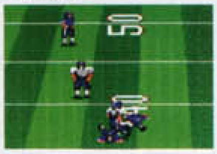
A sweet but dull maze shoot-'em-up in its own right, *Crack Down* is one of the best two-player co-operative games ever. Playing two characters with the unfortunate monikers of Ben Breaker and Andy Attacker, you get a split-screen kind of affair where devious interaction will see you getting all the computer enemies to shoot each other instead of you, which is one of the most satisfying things you can ever do in a video game. Limited, but good for a laugh.

MEGA says: If you haven't got that extra joypad and that game-loving friend, forget it completely. But, if you're the sociable type, this is one of the better ways to have a good time with two people (and a Mega Drive).

NEWS: Two-player game fanatics should wait for *Toejam And Earl 2*. Due out next year.

94. MIKE DITKA POWER FOOTBALL

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99



Look, it's not football, you bloody American gits. "Football" is a game you play with a ball and your feet, not with some missile-shaped thing and a load of padded bodies crunching into each other all the bloody time. Jesus...

MEGA says: Yet another American "football" game that isn't as good as *John Madden*. You know the drill by now.

NEWS: For the world exclusive review of *John Madden '93*, read next month's MEGA.

95. STORMLORD

Publisher: Razor Soft
Price: £34.99

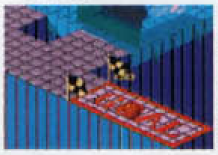
Scroll along, beat things up, go "phwoar!" at the naked fairies, and, er, that's about it really.

MEGA says: Hey, there's nothing wrong with naked fairies. If you're going to buy a scrolly beat-'em-up, you might as well have one with naked fairies in it. And dragons, of course.

NEWS: *Vampire Killer*, *Death Duel*, etc etc. Lots of semi-violent, annoyingly mediocre games are due to be released towards the end of the year.

96. MARBLE MADNESS

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99



Could this be the world's most ubiquitous game? It's been converted onto just about every format there's ever been since it first appeared in arcades in the early 1980s, but the bizarre appeal of rolling marbles down weird geometric courses suspended in space *still* holds a strange sway over gamers everywhere. Mega Drive *Marble Madness* is a flawless conversion of the coin-op, right down to the crucial two-player mode, and although it won't last you very long, it's great fun while it does.

MEGA says: Short-lived entertainment, but a classically original and enjoyable arcade game. A bit on the expensive side, though, for what you get.

NEWS: EA left out the secret level! Why?

97. ARCH RIVALS

Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £39.99

Comedy basketball that's not very funny. That's why it's no. 97.

MEGA says: Beating up your chums is a laugh, but hey – you don't need a Mega Drive to do that, right kids?

NEWS: The world exclusive review of *Team USA Basketball* can be found in this issue of MEGA on page 56.

98. SUPER OFF ROAD RACER

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £29.99

This was never supposed to be a one-player game, but if you do try to play it that way, you'll get a solid couple of days' fun before you throw it to the back of your games cupboard never to be seen again (helped out by the fact that here you get the coin-op's original eight levels plus an extra eight from the little-seen sequel). Get someone else involved and it's much more entertaining. The Mega Drive version, however, lacks the three- or four-player modes of some other versions, and so it never quite reaches the same giddy heights as the coin-op original did.

MEGA says: A definite luxury, unless you're a real *Super Sprint* freak. You'd be better off hanging around until someone invents a multi-player adaptor and then seeing what happens.

NEWS: The £29.99 price tag was going to extend to a whole range of "arcade classic" games. Nice idea, shame about the court case.

99. ROAD BLASTERS

Publisher: Tengen (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Sort of the car-driver's equivalent of *Road Rash*, this one. Superficially a straightforward *Out Run* clone job, *Road Blasters* boasts the intensely desirable feature of a machine-gun mounted on the front of your car with which you can blow away the rest of the field in each of 50 stages of heads-down no-nonsense racing. It gets repetitive very quickly, but there's a lot of high-octane excitement in store first.

MEGA says: Actually one of the more enjoyable driving games around, but if you're looking for anything with any degree of depth to it whatsoever, you're looking in the wrong place.

NEWS: Tengen have got *Pitfighter 2* gurgling along the Mega CD pipeline, hoorah! And probably *another* rivetting baseball game, huroo...

100. DICK TRACY

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Pretty routine horizontally-scrolling blast-'em-up stuff in a similar vein to *ESWAT* et al, but less sophisticated.

MEGA says: Less sophisticated than *ESWAT*? Yikes!

NEWS: *Predator 2* is the next big film licence to be unveiled in the UK, but the launch has had to be postponed until next year. MEGA will be adopting the guise of Danny Glover nearer the time. Stay tuned.

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WORST 10

These ten sad, shambling mockeries of decent videogame material are the pits, the warts on the bottom of Sega's magnificent Nintendo-beating arsenal of games. But their days of party-pooping are over, because MEGA now shows them for what they really are... the ten worst games of all time!

1. ALTERED BEAST

This is it, not only the most tedious platform/beat-'em-up imaginable, but the worst Sega Mega Drive game of the lot. The only words which can truly describe the pits to which standards were dropped when Sega barfed out *Altered Beast* haven't yet been invented. If *John Madden's Football* is Kim Basinger, then *Altered Beast* is a crocodile. Work out the rest of the analogy for yourself...

2. LAST BATTLE

Sorry, just too crap to print. If you really want to see Last Battle, you'll have to buy it.

Picture the scene...
Sega's managing director storms into the product development section saying: "Quick, we only need to produce one more game this month and we'll all win a matching teapot and eggwhisk from the company's work incentive scheme!"
Programmer no. 1: "But we've only got five minutes to go."
MD: "Come on man. You can do it. Just chuck in some ninjas, a couple of made-up karate moves that don't work properly, two frames of animation, some bog-standard bad guys and a monotonous level system that just keeps on going until the player falls asleep!"
Programmer no. 2: "But what about quality, value for money and service to our customers?"
MD: "Have you seen the lengths of the dole queues recently, number two?"
Programmer no. 2: (Typing furiously) "consider the teapot yours, sir..."
...Or something like that anyway.

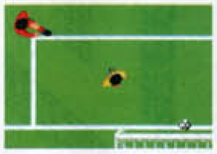
3. TURBO OUT RUN

Looks great, plays awful. Take the initials of *Turbo Out Run*, then reverse them. It all starts to make sense in a spooky kind of way...

4. DJ BOY

A comedy beat-'em-up on roller skates. Ten out of ten for imagination, minus several million for implementation. Uncontrollable, unresponsive and inexplicably poor.

5. WORLD CUP ITALIA '90



You want to hear a story? Here goes...
When *World Cup Italia '90* first appeared almost two years ago, it was the Mega Drive's only footy game. People wanted it to be good – and some even believed it was OK (ignoring the unfathomable control method, capricious game logic and spectacularly poor graphics). One of these unshakable optimists was a guy one of the MEGA team used to work with. One afternoon a friend of his dropped into the office and was challenged at *WCI '90* (even though he'd never laid eyes on a Mega Drive before). The two started to fight it out and, at half time the score was 0-0. "You must be a natural," declared our optimistic colleague. "Well yes, I did seem to be doing OK," was the reply. It was only at the end of the second half that someone noticed that he was holding his control pad upside down...

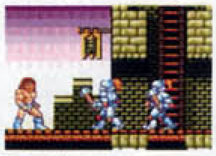
6. FANTASIA

How can anything so beautiful be so heart-maddeningly ugly to play? It's a mystery.

7. JORDAN VERSUS BIRD

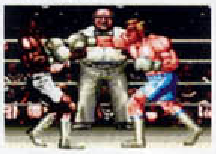
Have you ever sat at home watching wallpaper fade? Can you imagine how spine-tinglingly exciting it would be? *Jordan Versus Bird* equals this level of rivetting euphoria, just.

8. ONSLAUGHT



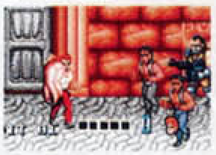
Take a Master System game, tone-down the graphics, let a gorilla play around with the control system, insert a ground-breaking, revolutionary difficulty tuning element known as "the random death generator" and turn it up to full effect. You've got *Onslaught*.

9. JAMES "BUSTER DOUGLAS" BOXING



Challenge. That's what a decent boxing game should be all about – demanding from the player technique, stamina, quick reactions, and a different game plan for each opponent. *James "Buster Douglas" Boxing*, however, demands something entirely different: a rapid-fire joystick. Slap it on auto-fire, press left and then go off and make a cup of tea. About twenty minutes later the world championship belt is yours.

10. DOUBLE DRAGON



"Oh well, it's almost arcade perfect!" the ignorant will declare. Just shows what a mind-numbingly dull coin-op it was then. Slower than a particularly laid-back sloth *and* less exciting.

YOU WANT TO ARGUE ABOUT IT?

Fine. If you think that MEGA's Top 100 is way off the mark, then write and let us know: Arguments Ahoy! MEGA, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

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THE 1992 SE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSH

Nine Sega hot-shots from around Europe flew into London to play Mega Drive. After three hours, one was to emerge victorious. MEGA were there to gallantly applaud the winner and heartlessly challenge the sobbing losers to a thrashing at *EA Hockey*

Up for grabs was the first officially imported Mega CD, and the prestige of being hailed as the best gamesplayer in Europe. Danny Curley (the 1991 champion) was disqualified after retaining his British title, on the grounds that he is now a professional gamesplayer. MEGA's budding hopefuls were also given the big thumbs down. Would we have won? You bet. Paul beat Danny in a one-off, three-game grudge match earlier in the year, and Neil has stuffed the chubby champ at *Madden* on all previous meetings.

Wales all the way...

But no one can accuse MEGA of sour grapes, and so we were pleased to cheer for 14-year-old Karl Roberts from Port Talbot in Wales, the man Sega finally decided should be responsible for keeping the British end up. And so, after a manly slap on the back from Danny and a quick training course on how to say "prepare to be humiliated, compost face" in nine European languages from Neil, Karl swaggered into the auditorium to do battle.

Andy Crane (of *Motormouth* and sensible haircut fame) and Julien Clarey ("Thank you for such kind applause, I always like a warm hand on my entrance." Crikey!) were MCing the contest, and so, after five minutes of humorous banter, sarcastic comments and worried looks from assorted European parents as to what a strange man wearing make-up and a dress was doing to their sons, all nine competitors got stuck into the first game: a ten-minute, who-can-score-the-most-points bash through *Sonic*.

The top score was 53,220 from Fabrice Menache of France. Karl romped (well, crawled) in with a humble 22,380. OK, so it may not sound like such a good score, but try to imagine doing it while Julien Clarey is publicly passing comment on your hairstyle – it's no laughing matter.

Next came a five-minute tarmac-scorching race to glory on *Road Rash*. The nine competitors got their motors running and headed out on the highways of the Sierra Nevada to see just how far a man can get. Germany romped home half a mile ahead of the rest of the pack, having clocked up 10.3 miles – that's an average speed of 123.6 mph. Karl came in second, having covered 9.8 miles, and third was Abel Vascunan from Spain with 9.4 miles.

"By ze beard of Wotan – zat vas a struggle!" Rezo Abdolali ('92 German and Euro champ)

A respectable third...

Karl was lying comfortably in third place after the first two games, and he was determined to make the third event (a mystery game, hot from Japan) his own. The game was *Green Dog* (a bizarre, surfing-platform(!) game), but Karl couldn't get to grips with it. This was the first time any of the players had seen or heard of the game, so it was really a test of *Krypten Factor* proportions to see who could get their head around a new control method and game objective the quickest. The man with the fastest reactions turned out to be Reza Abdolali from Germany (must be all the sauerkraut he eats, or something). MEGA watched in vain as our-man-Karl failed to make it into the top three and (even more disappointingly) failed to shout across a quick reminder of the good ol' days of '66 to the jubilant German. (That will be a gratuitous "England slaughtering Germany 3-1 in the final of the 1966 World Cup" reference I suppose? Remember: 1993 and all that – Ed). Yes, sorry.

Too little, too late...

Anyway, that was it – the rot had set in, and despite a spirited third place in the fourth event (a joypad-pounding ten minutes of *Olympic Gold*) and a plucky second place in the fifth and final event *(Michael Jackson's Moonwalker)*, Karl had done too little, too late, and it was the German who walked off with the main prize. Overall, Karl came a respectable fourth – the boy done well.

After the prize-giving and TV filming had finished, Reza Abdolali (the German champ) told MEGA: "By the beard of Wotan, that was a struggle! But I am very, very happy." Well, so he should be – part of his prize was a trip to go to the Barcelona Olympics the next day. Karl was philosophical: "Well, I had a good time and there's always next year". Good man, stiff upper lip and all that.

And MEGA? Well, we just wish that we'd been allowed to enter. Another Mega CD would have looked good in the office, and you wouldn't have minded if the mag had been late because we were all in Barcelona, would you? But MEGA congratulations to Reza, MEGA respect to Karl for putting on such a brave fight and MEGA advice to Julien Clarey: shave your armpits, OK? ☻

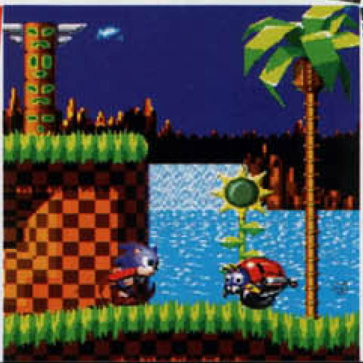
GA

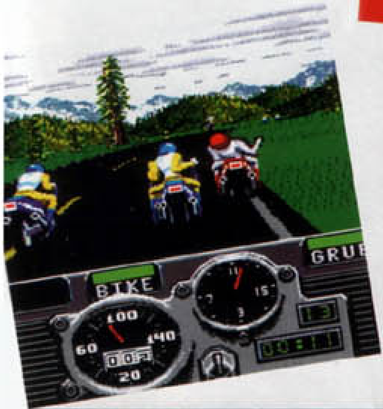
IPS

Above: Fascinating MJ fact No. 34. He is *well* interested in Sega games. Here he sticks his nose into *Galaxy Force 2*. Don't forget to ask for it back! Arf. (Oh dear – Legal Ed)

Above right: The pole vault. Frantic button-pressing and desperate twitching won't help Frederick Mues from Belgium – he hasn't even *seen* the game before! No wonder he's sweating

Below: Two sad, delirious fools

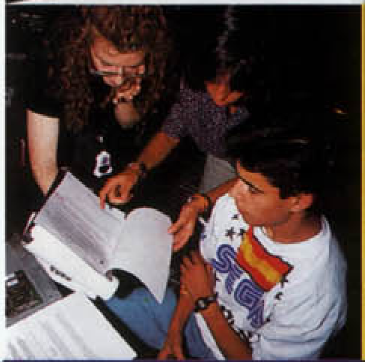




Above: *Sonic The Hedgehog*. Can *you* beat 53,220 points after ten minutes (of real-time play) starting on act three of Marble Zone? Try it

Above right: Now this is a *seriously* heavy-duty company car. This Sega limo chauffeured the nine finalists to the Michael Jackson concert after the contest. For some reason, they wouldn't let Neil borrow it...

Right: The new '92 champ, euphoric after two hours of joypad abuse



Right: The jubilant German collects a Mega CD from Nick Alexander, Sega's European boss. (Nick's the one in the trousers)

Above left: Motorcycle heroics in *Road Rash*. European drivers, eh?

Left: Tensions rise as all the scores are counted. Here we see Abel Vascunana from Spain claiming his 10-point suntan bonus

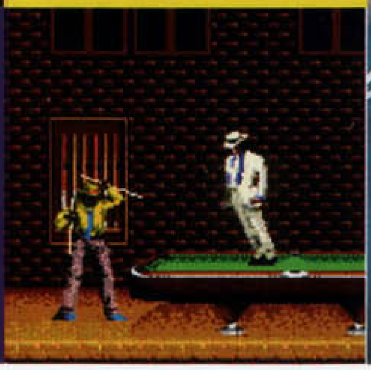
Below: *MJ's Moonwalker* in action

R U UP 2 IT?

Have you got what it takes to enter the 1993 Sega European Championships? Then keep reading MEGA. We'll be letting you know *exactly* what you have to do to enter next year's contest. Until then, stay tuned to your local FM radio station for news of preliminary qualifying heats. Good luck!

Far left: "Owwww!!!" etc. He's bad, he's bad, he's really rather naughty

Left: *Olympic Gold* – ouch, oof, eep, phew, uh-oh, *CRUNCH*, aaargh!, oh



MEGA MOUTH

Mega Mouth is a feature in which we analyse your input before carefully constructing a printed solution. What? Well, I guess some would call it the letters page. Oh, right...

WIN SOMETHING FAB! GET ANOTHER MAG...

... Er no, no, that's not right. We're actually a pretty generous bunch here at MEGA, so we're going to give away a free game to the person who sends in the best letter each month. It doesn't have to be clever, funny, un-funny, insulting – in fact, there are no rules. It just depends on which one gives us the most entertaining read. And if you think we'll be won over by lots of cringey, fawning behaviour, you'd be wrong. No, only gifts of hard cash will sway our decision one way or the other (fnah). So send your appalling compositions to MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Cheers luvvers.

You could win an all-expenses-paid trip for two to the Caribbean...

... or drive away in this fabulous red Ferrari sports car...

ARIEL
Mermaid

... but not in this mag. We're only giving away a cart each month

THE QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK WHICH WE'D REALLY RATHER THEY DIDN'T

Right, over and over, we see magazines struggling under the sheer volume of scabby letters which are sent in by people who have obviously spent all of five nano-seconds composing them. Instead of allowing ourselves to be lambasted by loons, bothered by berks and hassled by... er, hassling types, we're going to answer those questions that really shouldn't have been asked in the first place. Here goes:

Q Which is better, the Nintendo Super NES or the Sega Mega Drive?

A Look, why don't you make up your own minds? If you're that worried about it, nip down Boots or something and try both machines out. The thing is, if you're reading this, it's a pretty fair bet that you own a Mega Drive, and as you're still buying computer magazines, it's also a fair bet that your machine hasn't been put in a cupboard to gather dust. If you're happy with your machine (Mega Drive or Nintendo), then little else matters. One thing to bear in mind, however, is that games for any system are expensive, so if most of your friends own one type of machine, it might be best to go for that one so that you can exchange games. If you're a real games fan, it would be stupid indeed to dismiss everything that appears for one particular system – there's good and bad software in both camps, chaps. Just enjoy playing games and everyone will be happy.

Q Do you think Sonic 2 will be out on the Mega CD?

A Let's look at it this way. Sonic 2 is likely to be the biggest-selling Sega game of all time. So is Mr Sega going to say, "Ah well, we'll just release it on cart and leave it at that. After all, it's not like we need the money"? Naaah, we suspect it'll be out on everything.

Q Is it possible to play Game Gear games on a Mega Drive?

A Er, no. But it is possible to play Master System titles on it with the Power Base Converter (available from most console dealers) and, to be frank, MS and GG titles are pretty much the same. Besides, with the wealth of Mega Drive stuff around, there's really not much point in playing the 8-bit stuff if you've already invested in the16-bit beastie.

Q Why do Kriss Kross wear their trousers so that the cod-pieces are tight around their bottoms and the bottom bit baggy around their under-developed cod-pieces?

A Because they are sad, and desperate to be famous.

Q Why does my mother always mix carrot and swede together when it's quite plain to everyone that I detest this foul mixture?

A Not a clue, but our mothers used to do exactly the same, so shut up and stop whingeing.

Q Is it true that you'll vomit if you sit with your back to the fire? My mum says it is.

A Sad old bats, mothers. No, this is yet another ludicrous fable that was passed onto them by their equally mad parents.

Q When will the Mega CD be out and how much will it cost?

A It'll be out in November and could cost anywhere from between £200 and £350. We'll let you know as soon as we have some more reliable information on this most bizarre of subjects.

Q Surely this can't go on. Haven't we got better things to fill the letters page with? A nice photograph of some fit birds perhaps? Preferably with very little clo...

A Right. That's enough. Let's get on with running a proper mag now, shall we?

MEGA
The Mega Drive mag with the most!

Dear MEGA,
My cart doesn't work but my brother's does and he says it can't be the wires because a friend of his at school has the Japanese version and it's a different colour so they won't be as good.
Yours, Edmund Git

Amazing isn't it? We know that sounded like a load of old crap, but, believe it or not, this is typical of some of the letters which magazines receive. What can we do? Print it and say, "What the hell are you on about?" No, the only thing we can do is sling it in the bin. So be warned, if anyone sends us rubbish like this, we'll bin it. No, better still, we'll print it and take the mickey out of you something chronic and, as if that isn't bad enough, we'll also send you an embarrassingly bad prize. Hopefully, this is an incentive for you to write more carefully, instead of scrawling down the first things that come into your heads.

EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY OF A STUNT MEGA DRIVE

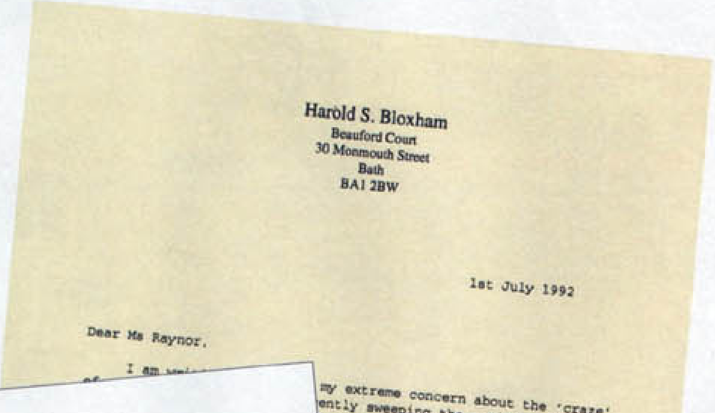
Here it is, the all-singing, all-dancing, all-unoriginal (it's been done a million times before in other magazines) console-in-a-funny-place bit. All we want you to do is send in a photograph of your Mega Drive in as strange a place as possible. Remember, you can be as adventurous as you like, but we won't be held responsible for any deaths, maimings, injuries, or embarrassments at the local accident and emergency department which are a result of this sad little competition. It may be nob, it may be laughable, but let's face it if you come out on top, you could win a game.

Because of the nature of this challenge you should address your pictures to: Stunt Mega Drive, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

With an insane grin, the fearless Mega Drive bungied earthwards...

THE CURIOUS LETTERS OF HAROLD S BLOXHAM

Harold S Bloxham – ex-Colonel, lover of classical music, and ranting old git. MEGA was in turmoil when this irrational old duffer barged his way into the office claiming that, "Video games are Lucifer's creation". The only way to get rid of him was to print the letters he'd received from celebrities he claimed backed up his bizarre theory. Here's the first of many (oh dear).



Harold S. Bloxham
Beauford Court
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

1st July 1992

Dear Ms Raynor,

I am wri
of
my extreme concern about the 'craze'
ently sweeping the nation's youth. It
r and disturbing.

soles' are eroding the brains of
bly informed that youths spend hour
o their TV screens hell bent on
nd all manner of outlandish and fic-

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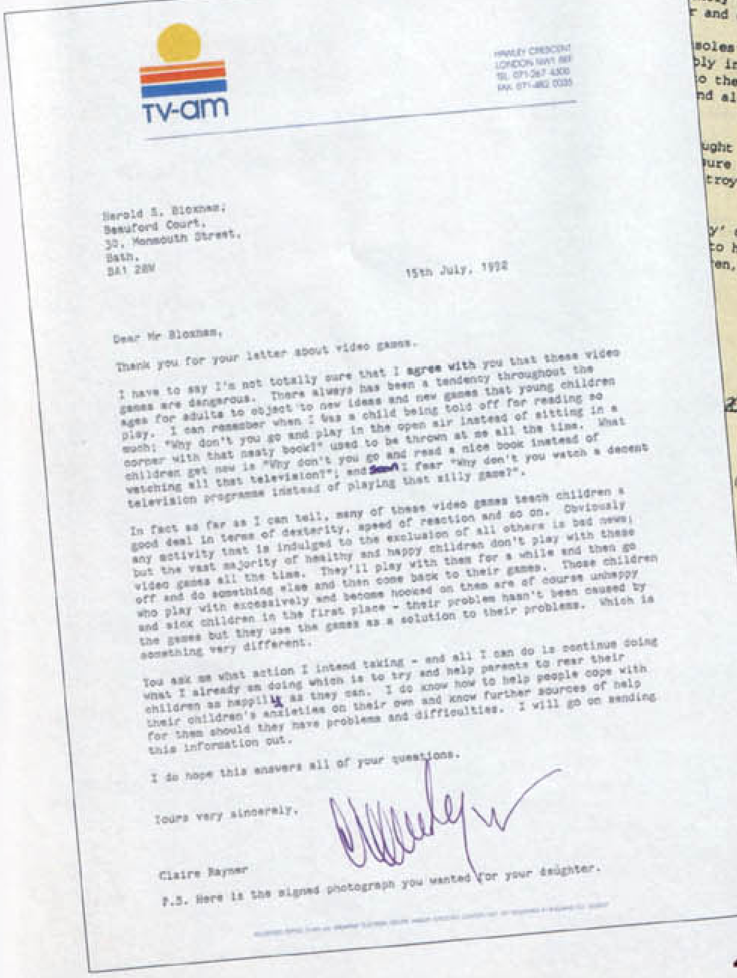

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Harold S. Bloxham,
Beauford Court,
30, Monmouth Street,
Bath,
BA1 2BW

15th July, 1992

Dear Mr Bloxham,

Thank you for your letter about video games.

I have to say I'm not totally sure that I **agree with** you that these video games are dangerous. There always has been a tendency throughout the ages for adults to object to new ideas and new games that young children play. I can remember when I was a child being told off for reading so much; "Why don't you go and play in the open air instead of sitting in a corner with that nasty book?" used to be thrown at me all the time. What children get now is "Why don't you go and read a nice book instead of watching all that television?"; and soon I fear "Why don't you watch a decent television programme instead of playing that silly game?".

In fact as far as I can tell, many of these video games teach children a good deal in terms of dexterity, speed of reaction and so on. Obviously any activity that is indulged to the exclusion of all others is bad news; but the vast majority of healthy and happy children don't play with these video games all the time. They'll play with them for a while and then go off and do something else and then come back to their games. Those children who play with excessively and become hooked on them are of course unhappy and sick children in the first place - their problem hasn't been caused by the games but they use the games as a solution to their problems. Which is something very different.

You ask me what action I intend taking - and all I can do is continue doing what I already am doing which is to try and help parents to rear their children as happily as they can. I do know how to help people cope with their children's anxieties on their own and know further sources of help for them should they have problems and difficulties. I will go on sending this information out.

I do hope this answers all of your questions.

Yours very sincerely,

Claire Rayner

P.S. Here is the signed photograph you wanted for your daughter.

Best wishes
Claire Rayner
Claire Rayner
tv-am

MEGA MOUTH,
Future Publishing Ltd.,
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Bath BA1 2BW

CONSEQUENCES

TAKE A LOOK AT THE OPENING PARAGRAPHS BELOW AND WRITE THE NEXT INSTALMENT...

To be honest, it's sometimes a bit crap being an adult. Having to be a professional, hardworking journalist all the time does get a bit wearing, so we wondered what we could do that would be incredibly childish, infantile, pathetic, but most of all, a bit of a giggle. Then we remembered that consequences game which we used to play at school, where someone would start a story, then the next person would continue it and so on until we had this dire mish mash of plots and characters.

So, we have decided to resurrect this pathetic school-day tradition and we want you to take part. All you have to do is write the next instalment to the opening paragraphs below. Make it as funny and ridiculous as possible, but please try to keep it under 200 words. The best entry will be printed next month and the person who sent it in will get a prize. What's more, we'll continue the story each and every month until such a time as we're deluged with letters of protest (so it should last about three months).

Get writing folks!

"Weston-Super-Mare," shrieked Neil, "that's where we can go for the weekend." Andy looked disturbed, "You're forgetting one thing Neil, our tomato crop is already over-ripe and I fear that if they are not plucked from their furry stalks this very weekend, we will lose our eligibility for this year's 'most fruitsome magazine' competition."

Paul and Amanda looked on with furrowed brows.

"Pants!" cried Neil. "This is a grave dilemma indeed, for my long-lost Aunt from Morocco is turning up this afternoon with a mysterious elephant-shaped package...."

"Yes," added Amanda. "And don't forget that we had that strange phone call this morning from that man claiming to be from a small lighthouse just off Portland Bill. What on earth could he have wanted?"

"Dunno," said Paul, "but I too have reasons for missing the Weston-Super-Mare trip and the great tomato-picking session."

"WHAAAT?" everyone said in unison.

"Yes it's true," he murmured sheepishly, "my hydraulic leg inserts have been playing up recently, and it's been taking me three hours to walk to work because the wayward limbs have been carrying me from pillar to post. Until I can figure out what's going wrong, I fear I won't be able to continue with my turnip-carving night-school class."

Will Neil ever get to Weston?
Will the tomatoes perish?
What is in that elephant-shaped package?
Who is the mysterious lighthouse keeper?
And what is causing Paul's curious leg motions? You tell us.

Send your stories to MEGA CONSEQUENCES, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

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Nothing adds to the atmosphere of a game like good sound effects and music. But if you're depending on anything less than these beautifully sharp and clear 8-watt speakers, you're not getting the full force of Sega gamesplaying. *Everything* you need, including all connectors, is included.

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SEGA

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Code MEGSE5 **Price £9.99**

MEGA
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MEGA BINDER

When you subscribe to MEGA and get your free Akira video – see page 86 for full details – you're going to need somewhere to keep all those copies neat and, furthermore, tidy. We've got just the item. Buy it. Note: your MEGA binder also doubles as a handy big fat juicy spider swatter.

Code MEGBIN/2 **Price £5.99/£11.00**

LOOK OUT! IT'S THE ORDER FORM. OH GO ON THEN: RUSH ME...

☐ **Nuby Cartridge Soft Pak Price £9.99 Code MEGSE5**

☐ **Mega Binder Price £5.99 (or £11 for two) Code MEGBIN (2 = MEGBIN2)**

☐ **Action Replay from Datel Price £44.99 Code MEGACT**

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MEGA/ISSUE1/1092

IT'S QUIZ TIME!

WIN! £200 worth of carts!

The lights dim and a voice from the gloom announces: "Good evening. Your specialised subject is yourself and your opinion of MEGA. Your time starts... NOW!"

Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to a brand new sort of quiz show, where we ask the questions and you win the prizes.

So, why are we doing it? Simply because we want to know everything about you and what you like and dislike about MEGA. That way, we can make the magazine even better.

But why should you do it? Two reasons really: firstly, because you can help make MEGA even better, and secondly (in the unlikely event of your bank manager quizzing you on your motives for replying to this questionnaire) because there is £200 worth of carts up for grabs for one lucky entrant!

So, if you are sitting comfortably, put your fingers on the buzzers and we'll enter the first round.

1. Thank you for joining us here tonight. Let's start in the traditional way. You and your Mega Drive, how long have you been together?

........................years........................months

2. Lovely, and what a good looking couple you make. Are you planning any additions (ahem) to the family? A Mega CD perhaps...?

☐ Definitely
☐ No way
☐ It depends if the games are any good or not
☐ It depends how much it costs
☐ It depends if the Wonder Mega is any good or not
☐ I've already got one, thanks matey

3. Every family has a few black sheep – let's hear about yours. Do you own (and still use) any of these other machines?

☐ Sega Master System
☐ Sega Game Gear
☐ Mega CD
☐ NES
☐ SNES
☐ Game Boy
☐ Neo Geo
☐ Lynx
☐ Amiga
☐ Atari ST
☐ PC
☐ C64
☐ Sinclair Spectrum
☐ Amstrad CPC

4. OK, straight into round one. Buzz in NOW if you know... are you going to subscribe to MEGA? (I can only accept your first answer.)

☐ Yes! (go to question 6)
☐ I say... maybe (go to question 6)
☐ No, I don't want to commit myself (go to question 6)
☐ No, I can't afford the lump sum (go to question 6)
☐ No, it doesn't appear to offer good value (go to question 5)

5. Would you know a great bargain, a real chance to grab yourself a great deal, if it came up and gave you a haircut?

☐ Er, probably not. No.

6. You picked a G, and G is for "Games". Which are your top five favourite Mega Drive games of all time?

....

....

....

....

....

7. Onto the number round now. How many carts do you own?

....

8. We asked 100 people how often they got a new game. Er, now we want to ask you. How often do you buy (or are given) a new Mega Drive cart?

☐ Every month
☐ Every two months
☐ Four times a year
☐ Three times a year
☐ Twice a year
☐ Once a year

9. Your Mega Drive is safe, we can't take that away from you. But do you regularly gamble your old carts for new ones?

☐ No
☐ Yes, with friends
☐ Yes, through an exchange club

10. We asked your lovely wife how she thought you'd answer the following question. If asked: "What factors determine which carts you buy?", what would you say?

(Rate each of these influences out of ten)

Reviews in MEGA	...../10
Reviews in other magazines	...../10
Advertising	...../10
Recommendations from friends	...../10
What's in the shop when you have the money to buy a cart	...../10
On a hunch, or 'cos you reckon it "sounds good"	...../10

11. You picked a blue-ball question. On average, how many hours a week do you play Mega Drive?

........................hours

12. Which other console mags do you read? Give them a mark out of ten.

MEGA ...../10

..../10

..../10

..../10

..../10

..../10

13. To gain control of the board. If MEGA isn't your favourite console magazine, why not? What do you prefer about another?

....

....

....

14. Home or away? Right... how many people read your copy of MEGA (including yourself)?

....

15. To complete the gold run, rate each section of MEGA out of ten.

Cover	...../10
News	...../10
Kryten interview	...../10
EASN feature	...../10
Competitions	...../10
Previews	...../10
Reviews	...../10
Mega Play	...../10
The cut-out-and-keep tips pages	...../10
Arena	...../10
The Mega Medic	...../10
The all-time top 100 games	...../10
The Sega European Finals feature	...../10
Mega Mouth	...../10
The back page	...../10

16. For the duvets. If you could change anything about MEGA, what would it be?

....

....

17. I live in "BLANK"?

☐ SE England
☐ SW England
☐ Midlands
☐ Northern England

READERS' POLL

- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Wales
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Rest of the world

18. Quick-fire round now. How old are you?

....years old

19. Are you...?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

20. Are you...?

- ☐ In full-time employment
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ At college or university
- ☐ At school

21. Are you ready for the big money questions? Then let's go. What is your approximate annual income?

- ☐ Over £20,000 and proud of it
- ☐ £16,000 – £20,000
- ☐ £12,000 – £15,999
- ☐ £8,000 – £11,999
- ☐ £5,000 – £7,999
- ☐ £1,000 – £4,999
- ☐ Under £1,000
- ☐ Pocket money. And narked off about it matey.

22. Well, you answered the big money question very calmly. Now let's try and find out some more about you. You can't play Sega *all* day, can you? What else do you enjoy doing in your free time?

- ☐ Watching sports
- ☐ Playing sports
- ☐ Going to the movies
- ☐ Watching TV and videos
- ☐ Listening to music
- ☐ Going out to pubs
- ☐ Visiting friends
- ☐ Going to clubs or to see live bands
- ☐ Reading (that's books and not visiting towns in Berkshire)

23. Just for the record (our little joke there), what sort of music do you like?

- ☐ Chart music
- ☐ Rave/dance
- ☐ Rock
- ☐ Rap
- ☐ Metal
- ☐ Indie
- ☐ Reggae
- ☐ Jazz
- ☐ Classic
- ☐ Simon Bates is alright by me. So you name it, I'll listen to it

24. So, who's your favourite singer/band then?

....

25. What's been your favourite film over the last year?

....

26. And what's your favourite TV show?

....

27. Okay, straight into our "what happened next?" round now. Which of the following super, smashing and lovely items do you own or intend to buy during the next six months?

	Own	Intend to buy
Bicycle	☐	☐
Camera	☐	☐
Musical instrument	☐	☐
Motor cycle	☐	☐

28. Keep out of the black and into the red by listing which electrical goods you own or intend to buy during the next six months?

	Own	Intend to buy
Television	☐	☐
Video recorder	☐	☐
Camcorder	☐	☐
Cassette player	☐	☐
CD player	☐	☐
Personal stereo	☐	☐
Ghetto-blaster	☐	☐
Radio	☐	☐
Other hi-fi	☐	☐

29. Which of the following items do you buy or use at least once a week? No conferring now...

	Buy	Use
Aftershave/perfume	☐	☐
Toothpaste	☐	☐
Deodorants	☐	☐
Acne treatments	☐	☐
Contraceptives	☐	☐
Shampoo	☐	☐
Other hair products	☐	☐

30. The fondue set is yours, if you tell us which music and video products you've bought or rented in the last month.

	Bought	Rented
LP	☐	
Single	☐	
CD	☐	
Pre-recorded cassette	☐	
Blank cassette	☐	
Pre-recorded video	☐	☐
Blank video tape	☐	

31. Which of the following game, leisure or hobby products do you own or intend to buy in the next six months?

	Own	Intend to buy
Books	☐	☐
Model-kits	☐	☐
Board games and puzzles	☐	☐
Model railway stuff	☐	☐
Model racing car bits	☐	☐
Sports equipment	☐	☐

32. Which of the following types of clothes do you own or intend to buy in the next six months?

	Own	Intend to buy
Trainers	☐	☐
Jeans	☐	☐
Designer T-shirts	☐	☐
Other T-shirts	☐	☐
Trousers	☐	☐
Jackets	☐	☐
Baseball caps	☐	☐
Pants	☐	☐
Shoes	☐	☐
Shirts	☐	☐

33. Your specialised subject is food. Which of the following take-away food chains have you visited in the past month or intend to visit in the next month?

	Visited	Intend to visit
MacDonalds	☐	☐
Burger King	☐	☐
Other burger	☐	☐
Pizzaland	☐	☐
Pizza Express	☐	☐
Perfect Pizza	☐	☐
Pizza Hut	☐	☐
Other pizza	☐	☐
KFC	☐	☐
Spud-U-Like	☐	☐
Chinese	☐	☐
Indian	☐	☐
Other		

34. Which of the following food/drinks have you bought in the past month or intend to buy in the next month?

	Bought	Intend to buy
Chocolate bar	☐	☐
Chewing gum	☐	☐
Fizzy drink	☐	☐
Fruit drink	☐	☐
Ice cream	☐	☐
Biscuits	☐	☐
Breakfast cereal	☐	☐
Milk shake	☐	☐
Pot snack	☐	☐
Crisps	☐	☐
Sweets	☐	☐

35. Another big money question. Which of these money accounts do you hold or intend to open in the next six months?

	Hold	Intend to open
Bank current	☐	☐
Bank savings	☐	☐
Building society current	☐	☐
Building society savings	☐	☐
Post office giro	☐	☐
Post office savings	☐	☐
Premium bonds	☐	☐
Other		

36. Which bank/credit cards do you have or intend to have in the next six months?

	Have	Intend to have
Cheque card	☐	☐
Cash card	☐	☐
Visa	☐	☐
Mastercard	☐	☐
American Express	☐	☐
Diners Club	☐	☐
Store card(s)	☐	☐
Other		

37. And we've entered the final tie-break round. It's the best of three. So, what magazines apart from computer magazines do you read regularly?

Cosmopolitan	☐
Elle	☐
GQ	☐
Esquire	☐
Q	☐
Vox	☐
Select	☐
Empire	☐
Melody Maker	☐
NME	☐
MBUK	☐
Playboy	☐
Viz	☐
Judge Dredd	☐
Red Dwarf	☐
Shoot	☐
Smash Hits	☐
Other	

38. You're doing fine. Which of the following radio/TV stations do you listen to/watch regularly?

Capital FM	☐
BBC Radio 1	☐
Local FM radio	☐
MTV	☐
Sky Sports	☐
Sky Movies Plus	☐
The Movie Channel	☐
BBC 1	☐
BBC 2	☐
ITV	☐
Channel 4	☐

39. It all rides on this final question. What are your... BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! (I've started so I'll finish) ...three favourite programmes from the stations listed above?

1...

2...

3...

Didn't you do well. You've completed the quiz, now fill in your name and address and stick the form in an envelope. If you don't fancy cutting up the mag, we don't mind a photocopy of this pages. You'll feel good about having your say on how MEGA changes, and even better if you're the lucky winner of £200 worth of carts.

NAME: ....

ADDRESS: ....

....

....

....

....

....

Send the whole caboodle to:
MEGA Quiz,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, Avon
BA1 2BW

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All the data from this questionnaire may be stored on computer. Future Publishing may wish to pass this information on to third parties for their mailing lists. So, tick the box shown below if you want your name and address withheld from all computer records arising from this questionnaire. ☐

SORT YOUR LIFE OUT KIT

PARTS 1-4

1. Get enough food to survive on – and eat it.
2. Find a sound place to sleep – and then sleep there.
3. Wear the hottest gear and feel together about the world and yourself.
4. Resolve to enjoy the finest in all forms of entertainment – and stick to it.

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SHUT DOWN

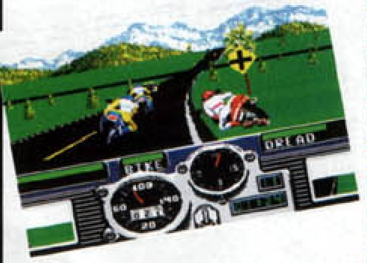
The page that's got still more MEGA news!!

Welcome to SHUT DOWN, the place where we can tell you all about what's coming up in next month's issue of MEGA, and where we can chuck all those bits and pieces of the mag which didn't really fit in anywhere else. Think of SHUT DOWN, then, as a clairvoyant dustbin.

Actually, no – don't think of any such thing, because SHUT DOWN is fab! SHUT DOWN is (literally) where it's at!

NEXT MONTH: *ROAD RASH 2*

Next month MEGA takes the first look at EA's rubber-burnin', bike-kickin', face-fillin' follow-up to the MD's best burn-'em-up



NEXT MONTH: ALL THE LATEST MEGA CD NEWS!

Next month we'll be bringing you the latest news from Japan and the USA, where some of the latest Mega CD games are a damn sight better than the sad, pitiful and (there's no getting away from it) crap stuff we've seen so far in the UK

NEXT MONTH: MEGA MARKET

Looking for a bargain? Can't find that elusive cart? Well, search no more, because in next month's MEGA there'll be hundreds of carts for sale or swap. **PLUS:** News, features, letters and some REALLY BIG competitions. **Issue two of MEGA will be comin' at ya** (well, to a newsagent near you*) **on Thursday 15 October.**

*If you'd like your copy of MEGA sooner, then why not subscribe? Take a butcher's at page 86 to find out what a barg' it is!

THE MEGA TV STARDOM COMPETITION...

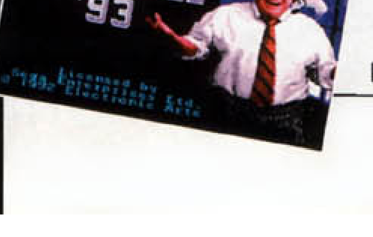
WIN! with Domark

ISSUE ONE: WIN A SKULL 'N' CROSSBONES COIN-OP FROM DOMARK

To win this fab prize we want to see you holding your copy of MEGA aloft on television. And every month, we'll add another fantastic prize to the MEGA giveaway pool until someone wins. This is the score: we want you to get yourself into a situation in which you appear (albeit briefly) on television, holding a copy of MEGA. Then, when the program is shown, video it and send us the tape – you should tape enough of the programme to ensure that we know it hasn't been faked.

The winner will be the first person to send us a videotape of a TV programme on which a copy of MEGA is clearly visible. We don't care how you do it, just don't get arrested. Send your tape to "Unbelievable I know, but my copy of MEGA is a TV Star", MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. Good luck!

NEXT MONTH: *John Madden Football '92* is simply the best Mega Drive game of all time. Could it be made any better? MEGA will be the first to let you know in the world exclusive review of EASN's *John Madden '93*, which will appear in the next issue of the magazine



TIPS

Appearing in next month's MEGA – More guides, tips and dirty cheats

INTRODUCING... THE A'S ON THE BACK PAGE!

OK, minus several million for catchiness, but ten out of ten for accuracy when it comes to giving the answers to the Q'S IN THE NEWS. Award yourself a point for each correct answer, then check out how you did at the end. Here goes:

1. Yamoto
2. Ten
3. Four
4. Virgin Games
5. No, *Afterburner* was the coin-op. *Afterburner 2* was given the number 2 tag to avoid it being confused with the Master System game of the same name
6. *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*, and it was brill
7. Gillius Thunderhead
8. *Back To The Future 3*
9. Michael and Larry
10. Natasha
11. Oh yes
12. *The Killing Game Show*
13. Andre Agassi
14. No, they started out making jukeboxes
15. *ESWAT*
16. *Hellfire*
17. *Toe Jam And Earl*
18. *F22 Interceptor*
19. *Splatterhouse 2*
20. *The Aquatic Games*

1 - 8 points: Pathetic. You are to Sega knowledge what Magnus Magnuson is to hair fashion. Stick with MEGA, you may learn something

8 -14 points: Not bad at all. You know your *Sonics* from your *Kid Chameleons*, but you still haven't got what it really takes to call yourself a Sega expert. Try again next month – you're getting there

14 - 18 points: More like it. You know your games better than Andy Dyer knows his way to a pub. And believe us, that's praise indeed

18 - 20 points: What a star! You are either: a) a member of the MEGA team; b) should be a member of the MEGA team; or c) a cheat

That's all for now, quiz fans! Ba...

now this is MEGA...

...calling all Mega Drive, Master System and Game Gear Fans - this is the SEGA -

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As an added bonus you will be entered into our free competiton with a first prize of either a Game Gear, Mega Drive or 3 carts of your choice. You don't have to join to win!

** The competition winners are picked every two months. Winners notified by post.*

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My system is - Mega Drive ☐ Master System ☐ Game Gear ☐

☐ Please send me at the speed of light an Info Pack so that I can join the - PowerPlay CLUB

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address ______

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SEGA
PRO - MASTER
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SERIES EDITOR
IAN LIVINGSTONE

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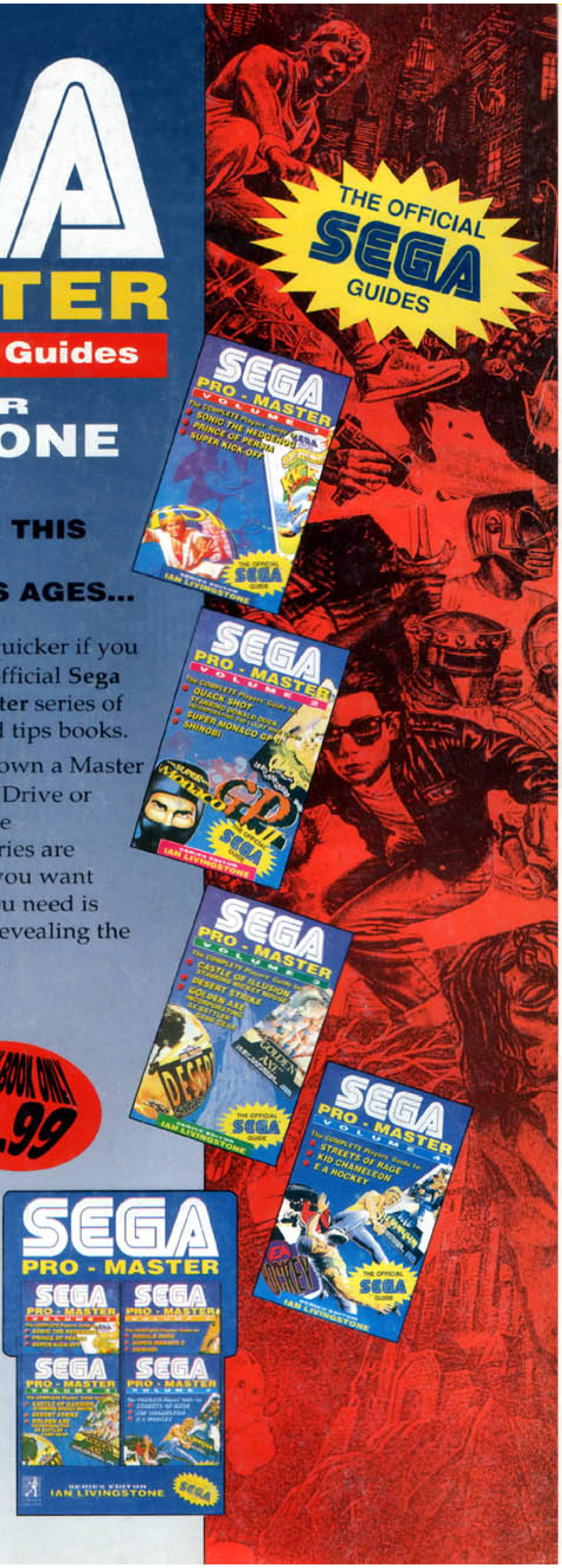

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MEGA

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